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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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The Creed of Buddha.

IT is with profound satisfaction that we begin the Notes and Comments of the new year with comment on a book so excellent, so wise and so inspiring, and withal so admirably written as the anonymous *Creed of Buddha.* We need hardly tell our readers that we are deeply interested in the validity of the Eastern wisdom, and are deeply convinced that our world of the West must draw upon the treasures of the inspiration of the East, in order to reach a true insight of the larger problems of life, and a sound criticism of the literature of religion. At the same time, we have always felt that, in this fortress of Eastern wisdom, Buddhism was a weak spot, partly because of the false views of Buddhism put into currency by certain widely read and quoted Western scholars, and partly because of inherent limitations whether in the teaching of Buddha, or in the records which have brought that teaching to us. We have had to face the fact that the official view of Buddhism was so negative, so nihilistic, that, far from being an ally in the war for the body and the eternal soul, it seemed, as set forth by the accredited teachers, to make that war useless and hopeless from the beginning; and, further, we were almost compelled to confess that, so far as the documents and traditions of his followers went, Buddha, esteemed one of the greatest spiritual lights of the East, nay, of the world, seemed to have taught a doctrine saddening and discouraging, and wholly devoid of real appeal for the life of the soul.

We have now to proclaim that this sad and discouraging view of Buddhism need never again be accepted, even on the authority of the most renowned and best accredited scholars of the West; for the splendidly gifted and finely balanced critic whose work we are considering has begun by taking all that these scholars have said of Buddhism, and, drawing a larger circle round their circle, as

Emerson said, has given us a view of Buddhism, of the Creed of Buddha, convincing, stimulating and vital in the highest degree. And while doing this, the writer of this soul-stirring book has expressed with justice and charm so many views and thoughts that we have long held dear, that we confess ourselves wholly captivated by his achievement, and profoundly grateful, as though for a direct personal service. We have commented on a good many remarkable books in these Notes, but none among them has so won our hearty admiration, none among them has so filled us with delight as this admirably written study of the Creed of Buddha.

The book falls naturally into two parts: first, a very luminous and convincing study of the Creed of Buddha, as our author conceives it, and then a not less compelling criticism of the officially accepted Misreading of Buddhism, to use the temperate and urbane phrase our author uses. Taking the two together, we say without hesitation that this anonymous writer has given us by far the best book on Buddhism ever written in the West, a book very much better, truer and nearer to the heart and message of the great Indian Master, than very many of the works of the Eastern Buddhists themselves, especially those of the Southern church, through many centuries. The book is a masterpiece, a superb piece of work, and we find it hard to choose words to express our profound satisfaction and delight, our debt of gratitude to its author. He has distinctly increased our love for, and delight in the scriptures of India, and has given us a view, at once novel, convincing, and in the highest degree inspiring, of the life work of Siddhartha the Compassionate.

More than once, the view has been expressed in our pages, that Buddhism holds a certain defined and vital relation to the great masterpieces of Indian wisdom, the great epochs of Indian illumination which preceded it; that Buddha, the Tathagata, walked, as that title declares, in the footsteps of those who had come before him to teach the word of life to mankind. And especially we have laid stress on the vital connection between three great periods of Indian revelation: that embodied in the older and greater Upanishads; that associated with the name of Krishna and the period of the Great War, and reflected in the Bhagavad Gita and other parts of the Mahabharata; and the teaching of Buddha himself; these three being the three great revelations of the pristine wisdom of India. Our readers may judge, therefore, of our high satisfaction, when we find this masterly study of the Creed of Buddha boldly taking the ground that Buddha's teaching is only to be understood and explained, when we recognise that it is in the line of the ancient wisdom, and, more specifically, that the inner heart of Buddhism, that deeper

teaching as to which Buddha himself kept silent, can have been nothing but the wisdom, the view of life and the soul so luminously and beautifully set forth in the greater Upanishads.

An author who writes so well should, however, be allowed to speak for himself. He begins his treatise thus: The religions of the civilized world may be divided into two great groups,—those of which the paramount deity is the Jewish Jehovah, and those of which the paramount deity is the Indian Brahma. Jehovah reigns, under the title of God the Father, over Europe and the continents which Europe has colonized; and, under the title of Allah, over western Asia and northern Africa. Brahma reigns in the far East, India being under his direct rule, while Indo-China, China and Japan belong to his "sphere of influence." Even in India he receives but little formal recognition. But he is content that this should be so. He is content that men should worship other gods until the time comes for them to give their hearts to him.

Between these two worlds, which I will call—loosely and inaccurately—the Western and the Eastern, there is a great gulf fixed, a gulf which few minds can pass over from either side. This gulf has been hollowed out by the erosive action of speculative thought. Western thought, which has always been dominated by the crude philosophy of the "average man," instinctively takes for granted the reality of outward things. Eastern thought, which, so far as it has been alive and active, has been mainly esoteric, instinctively takes for granted the reality of the "soul," or inward life. Such at least is the general trend of thought, on its various levels, in each of these dissevered worlds.

As is a man's conception of reality, so is the God whom he worships. Jehovah, the God of the Western world, is an essentially outward deity. Debarred by its instinctive disbelief in the soul from seeking for God in the world within, constrained by the same cause to indentify "Nature" with the world without, the Western mind has conceived of a natural order of things which is real because God made it so, and of a supernatural order of things which is the dwelling place of God. But because the Western mind, in its quest of reality, must needs look outward, this supernatural order of things is conceived of as a glorious and etherealized *replica* of the natural order; and God, veiled from sight by a cloud of splendor and mystery, is made in the image of man. Thus in the Western cosmology there are two worlds, the natural and the supernatural; and two bases of reality, lifeless matter and supernatural will.

In the East, where the soul is the supreme and fundamental reality, the identification of God with the world-soul, or soul of universal Nature, is the outcome of a movement of thought which is at

once natural and logical. This divine soul is the only real existence: by comparison with it all outward things are shadows, and all inward things, so far as they hold aloof from the all-embracing consciousness, are dreams. Thus in the Eastern cosmology there is one world, and one center of reality,—the world of our experience seen as it really is, seen by the soul, which, passing inward, in its quest of absolute reality, from veil to veil, and gathering within itself all things that seem to bar its way, arrives at last at the very fountain head of its being, at its own true self.

Thus does the author of *The Creed of Buddha* make clear his general position. We are compelled, reluctantly, to pass over the admirable chapter on The Wisdom of East, with which we find ourselves in the most cordial agreement, and to pass on to what is, after all, the heart and essence of the book, the section in which is set forth the true inwardness of Buddha's position and his relation to the "ancient wisdom," as this profoundly intuitive writer conceives them to be. We are led gradually to the point where we may take a just view of Buddha's life-work by a skilful and wisely conceived artifice. Our author sets himself to imagine an Eastern teacher confronted by certain problems, and seeking their solution in a certain way. Then he shows that it was just in this way that Buddha sought the solution of his own problems, and, finally, we are led naturally and convincingly to the conclusion that Buddha must have held the very standing-ground suggested for the imagined prophet described by the author.

Let us suppose, he says, that a great prophet appeared on earth, one who was in equal degrees a lover of his kind and a dreamer of spiritual dreams. Let us suppose that this prophet had drunk at the pure fountain of Indian thought, that he had accepted and assimilated the ideas which found expression in the Upanishads,—the idea of the reality of the soul, of the development of the individual soul through a chain of earth-lives, of the consummation of this process of development in the union of the individual with the Universal Soul and its consequent admission into a life of unimaginable peace and bliss. Let us further suppose that, when his heart and mind had become saturated with these ideas, he became possessed with the desire to communicate them to his fellow men. Let us imagine him looking down, from the standpoint of his exalted faith, on the toiling, suffering masses of mankind. Let us picture to ourselves the sorrow that must have pierced his heart when he saw how profoundly ignorant were the masses of the great truth which he had made his own; how entirely they were absorbed in the pursuit of what was material, trivial, perishable, unreal; how they were living, without knowing it, in a world of shadows and illusions; how

even religion, which must once have had an inward meaning, had become for them a round of ceremonies and a network of formulæ; how dense, in fine, and how deadly were the mists that overhung their lives, and how seldom could those mists be parted by any breath of spiritual freedom, or pierced by any ray of spiritual hope and joy. Let us suppose that he then looked forward into the future, and saw his fellow men returning to earth again and again, and leading lives as hollow, as purposeless, and as joyless as the lives which they were leading then; the process of their soul-growth being so slow, owing to their fundamental ignorance of reality, that for a long sequence of earth-lives no appreciable progress could be made. Would not the sympathetic sorrow which the vision of the present had awaked in him, be intensified by his vision of the future, and would not the longing to help his fellow men, to enlighten them, to lead them into the path of light and life, become at last an absorbing passion which left no room in his heart for any other desire?

But how, our author continues, could he give men the knowledge that they needed? It was ignorance of reality that had darkened and debased their lives. It was knowledge which they were waiting for, knowledge of what was real and what was true. How could he give them this most rare and most precious of all gifts? How could he transform their sense of reality, and quicken and purify their perception of truth? *Philosophical* knowledge of the truth of things is, for obvious reasons, beyond the reach of the masses. The average man has no turn for metaphysical speculation, and the worst service that one can render him is to tempt him to indulge in it; for in the atmosphere of verbal controversy reality becomes an abstraction, truth becomes a formula, while love, which is the real unsealer of all spiritual secrets, inevitably withers and dies. The *intuitive* apprehension of the truth of things is equally, and for equally obvious reasons, beyond the reach of the masses. The "psychical" faculties, which generate that rare but vividly real type of knowledge, though potentially present in all men, are developed in an exceedingly small minority; and the premature attempt to develop them would end in hysteria being mistaken for inspiration, and hallucination for divine truth. The *emotional* apprehension of the truth of things may seem to be within the reach of ordinary men. In reality it is also reserved for a chosen few; for it is only in the genuinely poetic nature that it can maintain its equable heat and pristine purity. In lower natures it burns itself away in pitchy flames of undisciplined sentiment, and dies out at last into formalism, dogmatism, and other "bodies of death." Moreover, the teacher

who appeals to the spiritual emotion of his disciples, and who thereby enters into emotional relations with them, and through them with *their* disciples and spiritual descendants, runs one serious risk. The chances are that, sooner or later, those who come under his influence, without having known him in the flesh, and who are therefore free to construct imaginary pictures of his life and person, will transfer to his personality the devotion which he wished them to give to his ideas, and will end by regarding his inevitable limitations, or rather the limitations of their own imagination—for by this time the teacher will have become a legendary hero—as the very boundaries of reality.

There remains, says this intuitive writer,—and here we come to the key with which he unlocks the secret of the method of Buddha and Buddha's silence concerning ultimate things,—there remains what I have elsewhere called the *real* apprehension of ultimate truth. This, and this alone, is within the reach of all men. The actual expansion of the soul, in response to the forces in Nature that are making for its development, will give men, little by little, the knowledge that they need; for as the soul expands, as it increases in wisdom and stature, its vision will become clearer and deeper, and its sense of proportion will be transformed. When the knowledge of reality has been finally won, the attractive forces of earth, which will then be *felt* to be wholly illusory, will have ceased to act, and the end of the soul's pilgrimage will be at hand. The best service, then, that a man can render to his fellowmen is to persuade them to enter the path of soul-growth. Or rather—for they entered it long ago—to follow it, no longer blindly and instinctively, but deliberately and of their own free will; and, by thus consciously co-operating with the expansive forces of Nature, to shorten the path of soul-growth, and to hasten the advent of its glorious goal.

That our prophet (so our author carries on his hypothetical exposition), looking at things from the standpoint of his own higher knowledge, should desire to render this service to his fellowmen may be taken for granted. But how should he persuade men that escape from the cycle of earth-lives was intrinsically desirable, that the path of soul-growth was the path of real life, that the goal to which it would lead them was worthy of their highest aspiration and their most strenuous endeavour? If their ignorance of reality was as dense as it seems to be, to what faculty could he appeal and on what ground of admitted truth should he take his stand? The relation between knowledge and action, in the sphere of moral life, presents a problem which is insoluble except on one hypothesis. Our difficulty is that for right action we need right knowledge; that

for right knowledge we need inward enlightenment; that for inward enlightenment we need the transforming influence of a life of right action. There is but one way of escape from this seemingly vicious circle. Apply the law of development to the inward life of the soul; and it will become clear that the sense of reality, like every other sense and power, exists in embryo in each individual man. It is to this embryonic sense of reality that our prophet would make his appeal. In doing so, he would provide both for the development of that sense, and for the concurrent development in the soul of his disciple of the germ of his own teaching. For the sense of reality, like every other sense and power, grows by being exercised; and if it is to be exercised, it must be appealed to and called upon to exert itself. It follows that, in appealing to a man's sense of reality, one helps it to grow; and it follows that, in helping the sense to grow, one trains it to understand and respond to the appeal that is made to it.

We may conjecture, then, that the teacher who wished to lead men to the knowledge of reality would begin by assuming that the sense of reality was latent in every heart. He would say to them, "Does this earth-life really satisfy you? Cannot you see for yourselves that in the last resort it is hollow and unreal? Do the prizes for which you strive content you when you have won them? Do they not crumble into dust as you grasp them? Everything that earth can give you—health, wealth, pleasure, power, success, fame —proves to be either transient or illusory. Health lasts a few years, and is then undermined by disease and decay. Wealth has neither meaning nor value except so far as it enables you to buy pleasure, success and fame. Pleasure palls upon you, and ceases at last to please. Or, if it does continue to please, age and disease forbid you to enjoy it. Power brings with it a weight of care and responsibility. Success has its counterpart in failure, for

'Things won are done: joy's soul lies in the doing.'

Fame is

'Enjoyed no sooner but despisèd straight.'

"Look down the vista of the years. If you continue to desire the things of earth, you will return to earth, drawn by the influences that now attract you, again and again. Does this prospect content you? Has your experience of earth been so happy that you wish to renew it again and again? Is it not true that the earth-life brings real happiness to those only who have found inward peace? And is it not true that inward peace, though it can transfigure earth and make it spiritual and beautiful, is won by detachment from earth, not by devotion to it? This inward peace, in enjoying which you drink the only draught of real happiness that the earth-life can

offer you, is a faint foretaste of what is in store for the soul when all its wanderings are over. Beyond all earth-lives a goal awaits you—a goal which crowns and completes the process of the soul's evolution—the goal of deep, perfect, inexhaustible bliss. This reward will be yours when you have broken the last of the ties by which earth attracts you, and in doing so have escaped, once and for ever, from 'the whirlpool of rebirth.' "

So far we are able to quote from this profound and lucid writer. We may briefly suggest the further progress and development of his thought by saying that, having thus drawn a hypothetical picture of a prophet who, profoundly believing the central truth of the Upanishads, had determined to make this truth available for the mass of mankind, our author goes on to show that Buddha, in his teaching, followed exactly the lines which such a prophet would follow, with the inference that Buddha, like this imagined prophet, did in fact rest his teaching on the deepest wisdom of the Upanishads, and most of all on the intuitive certainty that the individual soul is, at the last, one with the Universal Soul, the Oversoul; and that the growth of the individual soul is a progressive approach to, and a final identification with the Oversoul, in a state of unimaginable bliss, of infinite wisdom, of eternal life. This eternal life and illimitable joy are, therefore, the essence of the Nirvana taught by Buddha; and he only refrained from explaining the nature of that Nirvana, and the metaphysical justification of his belief in it, because he knew that his lowly disciples could not comprehend it, and that, not comprehending, they would be confused, and be set back, rather than set forward on the Path, by premature revelation. Therefore Buddha sealed his lips as to ultimate things, and gave to his disciples only what they could apprehend, a rule for daily life, which recommended itself to their innate sense and experience, and which, faithfully followed, would in time infallibly set their feet upon the way of peace, and bring about such soul-growth as would make comprehension, intellectual and intuitive alike, not only inevitable but easy, almost unconscious and natural.

In the light of this luminous idea, there follows an analysis of the rule of life which Buddha did give to his lowly disciples: of the Four Noble Truths, and the Noble Eightfold Path. And we are shewn, with admirable and eloquent simplicity, how these make for two great moral qualities which are attainable by everyone: control of the lower nature, which would otherwise check soul-growth; and sympathy, which opens out our hearts and consciousness, leading them into the hearts and lives of others, and thus expanding the

soul in real and vital growth. Soul-growth, obtained in these two ways, both of which rest on self-evident truths, will then make possible a certain degree of illumination, and this, again, will give a broader and firmer foothold for further control of the lower nature, and for a wider, deeper and more tender sympathy with others. Thus will right conduct and the illumination which flows therefrom help each other, and soul-growth will progress; slowly, perhaps, but surely, the goal will draw ever nearer, and, as we approach it, the splendid sheen of Nirvanic light will illumine our lives with the foreglow of everlasting day. But, that this safe progress on the path may be secured, the dangers which spring from metaphysical and verbal controversy, the dangers which spring from emotional attachment to the personality of the Teacher, the dangers of intolerance, of formalism,—the dangers that are set along the pathway of religions,—must all be avoided. And to secure that they may be avoided, there is no certain means but silence. Therefore concerning ultimate things, Buddha kept silence through his long ministry of many years, in spite of every effort that was made, by disciple or by opponent, to induce him to speak. And this wise silence, our author with profound insight conjectures, made no small part of Buddha's Great Renunciation.

The reality of this sacrifice of silence, and the consequences which might arise from it, are then brought home to us, in a long and penetrating analysis of the Western studies of Buddhism, which our author wisely calls A Misreading of Buddha. He shows, in a way at once simple, convincing and urbane, that the Western interpreters of Buddhism, misled by the sacrifice of silence whose cause has been so luminously revealed, do in fact infer, and lead others to believe, that Buddha kept silence concerning ultimate things because the answer was terrible and inevitable Death, a blackness of darkness appalling in its completeness. Thus did our Western critics read into the teaching of this great and luminous spirit the shallow materialism and nihilism of the nineteenth century, and, so doing, they have produced, for the edification of the Western world, not a revelation of the secret of Buddha, but a consistent and very injurious travesty, which has made confusion worse confounded. To the removal of this confusion, very luminous and masterly chapters are devoted, and these are followed by a study of the Bankruptcy of Western Thought, and an indication of how solvency may be restored by wise borrowing from the East, in such a way that, after due investment, the West may be able to repay what it has borrowed with compound interest.

Now that our analysis of this wonderful and epoch-making book has reached its natural term, we are vividly conscious that we are very far indeed from doing it justice. Much of what is best and wisest in it, we have had to pass over unnoted, and, for the rest, we feel very keenly that piecemeal quotation cannot but do great injustice to a theme so well-considered, and unfolded with such fine measure and gradation. We are not, however, without a remedy. We still have it in our power to make amends, and to lay our readers under a lasting obligation—by advising them, with all the insistence we possess, to get the book themselves, and to become acquainted at first hand with this masterly, illuminating and soul-satisfying study of the Creed of Buddha. It is a superb piece of work; the best treatise on Buddhism which has yet been given to the world.

In an address recently delivered before the Bartholomew Clubs of London, which are composed of city trades folk, Judge Rentoul enumerated what he called "The Fourteen Mistakes of Life": Setting up one's own standard of right and wrong and expecting others to conform to it; trying to measure the enjoyment of others by our own; expecting uniformity of opinion; looking for judgment and experience in youth; endeavoring to mold all dispositions alike; refusing to yield in unimportant trifles; looking for perfection in our own actions; worrying ourselves and others about what cannot be remedied; not alleviating as much suffering as we can; not making allowance for traits in others, apparently unfitting them for success in life; considering anything impossible that we ourselves cannot perform; refusing to believe anything which our finite minds cannot grasp; living as if the moment would last forever; estimating men and women by their nationality or by any outside quality.

PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS.*

AN INTERPRETATION

BY

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

THROUGH the Sutras of the First Book, Patanjali is concerned with the first great problem, the emergence of the spiritual man from the veils and meshes of the psychical nature, the moods and vestures of the mental and emotional man. Later will come the consideration of the nature and powers of the spiritual man, once he stands clear of the psychic veils and trammels, and a view of the realms in which these new spiritual powers are to be revealed.

At this point may come a word of explanation. I have been asked why I use the word Sutras, for these rules of Patanjali's system, when the word Aphorism has been connected with them in our minds for a generation. The reason is this: the name Aphorism suggests, to me at least, a pithy sentence of very general application; a piece of proverbial wisdom that may be quoted in a good many sets of circumstance, and which will almost bear on its face the evidence of its truth. But with a Sutra the case is different. It comes from the same root as the word "sew," and means, indeed, a thread, suggesting, therefore, a close-knit, consecutive chain of argument. Not only has each sutra a definite place in the system, but further, taken out of this place, it will be almost meaningless, and will by no means be self-evident. So I have thought best to adhere to the original word. The Sutras of Patanjali are as closely knit together, as dependent on each other, as the propositions of Euclid, and can no more be taken out of their proper setting.

In the sutras translated below, and which, as before, I have tried to interpret in a brief commentary, the problem of the emergence of the spiritual man is further dealt with. We are led to the consideration of the barriers to his emergence, of the overcoming of the barriers, and of certain steps and stages in the ascent from the ordinary consciousness of practical life, to the finer, deeper, radiant consciousness of the spiritual man.

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THE FIRST BOOK OF THE SUTRAS.

(*Continued.*)

30. **The barriers to interior consciousness, which drive the psychic nature this way and that, are these: sickness, inertia, doubt, light-mindedness, laziness, intemperance, false notions, inability to hold the ground gained, unsteadiness.**

We must remember that we are considering the spiritual man as enwrapped and enmeshed by the psychic nature, the emotional and mental powers; and as unable to come to clear consciousness, unable to stand and see clearly, because of the psychic veils of the personality. Nine of these are enumerated, and they go pretty thoroughly into the brute toughness of the psychic nature.

Sickness is included rather for its effect on the emotions and mind, since bodily infirmity, such as blindness or deafness, is no insuperable barrier to spiritual life, and may sometimes be a help, as cutting off distractions. It will be well for us to ponder over each of these nine activities, thinking of each as a psychic state, a barrier to the interior consciousness of the spiritual man.

31. **Grieving, despondency, bodily restlessness, the drawing in and sending forth of the life-breath, also contribute to drive the psychic nature to and fro.**

The first two moods are easily understood. We can well see how a sodden psychic condition, flagrantly opposed to the pure and positive joy of spiritual life, should be a barrier. The next, bodily restlessness, is in a special way the fault of our day and generation. When it is conquered, mental restlessness will be half conquered, too.

The next two terms, concerning the life-breath, offer some difficulty. The surface meaning is harsh and irregular breathing; the deeper meaning is a life of harsh and irregular impulses.

32. **Steady application to a principle is the way to put a stop to these.**

The will, which, in its pristine state, was full of vigor, has been steadily corrupted by self-indulgence, the seeking of moods and sensations for sensations' sake. Hence come all the morbid and sickly moods of the mind. The remedy is a return to the pristine state of the will, by vigorous, positive effort; or, as we are here told, by steady application to a principle. The principle to which we should thus steadily apply ourselves should be one arising from the reality of spiritual life; valorous work for the soul, in others as in ourselves.

33. **By sympathy with the happy, compassion for the sorrowful, delight in the holy, disregard of the unholy, the psychic nature moves to gracious peace.**

When we are wrapped up in ourselves, shrouded with the cloak of our egotism, absorbed in our pains and bitter thoughts, we are not willing to disturb or strain our own sickly mood by giving kindly sympathy to the happy, thus doubling their joy, or by showing compassion for the sad, thus halving their sorrow. We refuse to find delight in holy things, and let the mind brood in sad pessimism on unholy things. All these evil psychic moods must be conquered by strong effort of will. This rending of the veils will reveal to us something of the grace and peace which are of the interior consciousness of the spiritual man.

34. Or peace may be reached by the even sending forth and control of the life-breath.

Here again we may look for a double meaning: first, that even and quiet breathing which is a part of the victory over bodily restlessness; then the even and quiet tenor of life, without harsh or dissonant impulses, which brings stillness to the heart.

35. Faithful, persistent application to any object, if completely attained, will bind the mind to steadiness.

We are still considering how to overcome the wavering and perturbation of the psychic nature, which make it quite unfit to transmit the inward consciousness and stillness. We are once more told to use the will, and to train it by steady and persistent work: by "sitting close" to our work, in the phrase of the original.

36. As also will a joyful, radiant spirit.

There is no such illusion as gloomy pessimism, and it has been truly said that a man's cheerfulness is the measure of his faith. Gloom, despondency, the pale cast of thought, are very amenable to the will. Sturdy and courageous effort will bring a clear and valorous mind. But it must always be remembered that this is not for solace to the personal man, but is rather an offering to the ideal of spiritual life, a contribution to the universal and universally shared treasure in heaven.

37. Or the purging of self-indulgence from the psychic nature.

We must recognise that the fall of man is a reality, exemplified in our own persons. We have quite other sins than the animals, and far more deleterious; and they have all come through self-indulgence, with which our psychic natures are soaked through and through. As we climbed down hill for our pleasure, so must we climb up again for our purification and restoration to our former high estate. The process is painful, perhaps, yet indispensable.

38. Or a pondering on the perceptions gained in dreams and dreamless sleep.

For the Eastern sages, dreams are, it is true, made up of images

of waking life, reflections of what the eyes have seen and the ears heard. But dreams are something more, for the images are in a sense real, objective on their own plane; and the knowledge that there is another world, even a dream-world, lightens the tyranny of material life. Much of poetry and art is such a solace from dream-land. But there is more in dream, for it may image what is above, as well as what is below; not only the children of men, but also the children by the shore of the immortal sea that brought us hither, may throw their images on this magic mirror. So, too, of the secrets of dreamless sleep with its pure vision, in even greater degree.

39. Or meditative brooding on what is dearest to the heart.

Here is a thought which our own day is beginning to grasp: that love is a form of knowledge; that we truly know any thing or any person, by becoming one therewith, in love. Thus love has a wisdom that the mind cannot claim, and by this hearty love, this becoming one with what is beyond our personal borders, we may take a long step toward freedom. Two directions for this may be suggested: the pure love of the artist for his work, and the earnest, compassionate search into the hearts of others.

40. Thus he masters all, from the atom to the Infinite.

Newton was asked how he made his discoveries. By intending my mind on them, he replied. This steady pressure, this becoming one with what we seek to understand, whether it be atom or soul, is the one means to know. When we become a thing, we really know it, not otherwise. Therefore live the life, to know the doctrine; do the will of the Father, if you would know the Father.

41. When the perturbations of the psychic nature have all been stilled, then the consciousness, like a pure crystal, takes the color of what it rests on, whether that be the perceiver, perceiving, or the thing perceived.

This is a fuller expression of the last Sutra, and is so lucid that comment can hardly add to it. Everything is either perceiver, perceiving, or the thing perceived; or, as we might say, consciousness, force, or matter. The sage tells us that the one key will unlock the secrets of all three, the secrets of consciousness, force and matter alike. The thought is, that the cordial sympathy of a gentle heart, intuitively understanding the hearts of others, is really a manifestation of the same power as that penetrating perception whereby one divines the secrets of planetary motions or atomic structure.

42. When the consciousness, in perceiving, is successively occupied by the name, the idea, and the understanding of what it is dwelling on, this is the distributive action of the mind.

We are now to trace the ascending stages of perception, from

the most external observation to pure intuitive vision. We begin with the perception of gross substances, or, as we might say, external and objective things, observed by the physical senses. In perceiving these external things, the mind's action may be either distributive and analytical, or non-distributive and intuitive, the second being the higher, as nearer to unity. Thus we may think analytically of something, say, a cow, first by name, then according to its appearance, and then through what we know of its nature; or we may think non-distributively, entering into the idea of the cow, as a famous painter of the Netherlands entered into the inmost being of the sheep he so lovingly depicted.

43. When the object dwells in the mind, clear of memory-pictures, devoid of any form, as a pure luminous idea, this is non-distributive perception.

We are still considering external, visible objects. Such perception as is here described is of the nature of that penetrating vision whereby Newton, intending his mind on things, made his discoveries, or that whereby a really great portrait painter pierces to the soul of him whom he paints, and makes that soul live on canvas. These stages of perception are described in this way, to lead the mind up to an understanding of the piercing soul-vision of the spiritual man, the immortal.

44. The same two stages, when referring to things of finer substance, are said to be with, or without, judicial action of the mind.

We now come to mental or psychical objects: to images in the mind. It is precisely by comparing, arranging and superposing these mind-images that we get our general notions or concepts. This process of analysis and synthesis, whereby we select certain qualities in a group of mind images, and then range together those of like quality, is the judicial action of the mind spoken of. But when we exercise swift divination upon the mind images, as does a poet or a man of genius, then we use a power higher than the judicial, and one nearer to the keen vision of the spiritual man.

45. Subtle substance rises in ascending degrees, to that pure nature which has no distinguishing mark.

As we ascend from outer material things which are permeated by separateness, and whose chief characteristic is to be separate, just as so many pebbles are separate from each other; as we ascend, first, to mind-images, which overlap and coalesce in both space and time, and then to ideas and principles, we finally come to purer essences, drawing ever nearer and nearer to unity.

Or we may illustrate this principle thus. Our bodily, external selves are quite distinct and separate, in form, name, place, substance;

our mental selves, of finer substance, meet and part, meet and part again, in perpetual concussion and interchange; our spiritual selves attain true consciousness through unity, where the partition wall between us and the Highest, between us and others, is broken down and we are all made perfect in the One. The highest riches are possessed by all pure souls, only when united. Thus we rise from separation to true individuality in unity.

46. The above are the degrees of limited and conditioned spiritual consciousness, still containing the seed of separateness.

In the four stages of perception above described, the spiritual vision is still working through the mental and psychical, the inner genius is still expressed through the outer, personal man. The spiritual man has yet to come completely to consciousness as himself, in his own realm, the psychical veils laid aside.

47. When pure perception without judicial action of the mind is reached, there follows the gracious peace of the inner self.

We have instanced certain types of this pure perception: the poet's divination, whereby he sees the spirit within the symbol, likeness in things unlike, and beauty in all things; the pure insight of the true philosopher, whose vision rests not on the appearances of life, but on its realities; or the saint's firm perception of spiritual life and being. All these are far advanced on the way; they have drawn near to the secret dwelling of peace.

48. In that peace, perception is unfailingly true.

The poet, the wise philosopher and the saint not only reach a wide and luminous consciousness, but they gain certain knowledge of substantial reality. When we know, we know that we know. For we have come to the stage where we know things by being them, and than being nothing can be more true. We rest on the rock, and know it to be rock, rooted in the very heart of the world.

49. The object of this perception is other than what is learned from the sacred books, or by sound inference, since this perception is particular.

The distinction is a luminous and inspiring one. The Scriptures teach general truths, concerning universal spiritual life and broad laws, and inference from their teaching is not less general. But the spiritual perception of the awakened seer brings particular truth concerning his own particular life and needs, whether these be for himself or others. He receives defined, precise knowledge, exactly applying to what he has at heart.

50. The impress on the consciousness springing from this perception supersedes all previous impressions.

Each state or field of the mind, each field of knowledge, so to

speak, which is reached by mental and emotional energies, is a psychical state, just as the mind picture of a stage with the actors on it is a psychical state or field. When the pure vision, as of the poet, the philosopher, the saint, fills the whole field, all lesser views and visions are crowded out. This high consciousness displaces all lesser consciousness. Yet, in a certain sense, that which is viewed as apart, even by the vision of a sage, has still an element of illusion, a thin psychical veil, however pure and luminous that veil may be. It is the last and highest psychic state.

51. When this impression ceases, then, since all impressions have ceased, there arises pure spiritual consciousness, with no seed of separateness left.

The last psychic veil is drawn aside, and the spiritual man stands with unveiled vision, pure, serene.

End of Book I.

"The love of the Sage for others receives its name from them. If they did not tell him of it, he would not know that he loved them; and when he knows it, he is as if he knew it not; when he hears it, he is as if he heard it not. His love of others never has an end, and their rest in him has also no end:—all this takes place naturally."—The Writings of Kwang-Tsze, in "The Texts of Tâoism," Vol. II, p. 116.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THEOSOPHY.

PREFACE.

A CONCEPTION that is at once profound and simple rarely meets with immediate comprehension. Our minds are so used to dealing with the complex details of the map of life, they are so narrowly focused upon the particular, that they miss the broad and general outlines and the significance of the names, written in widely spaced letters, across its entire surface. To see these a new perspective is needed, a certain aloofness of attitude and a refocusing of our vision which require time and an act of will. So it follows that there is usually an intermediate stage where but half the larger letters are perceived, and their sequence seems meaningless or sheer folly.

This is illustrated in the history of every great scientific or philosophic or religious movement. It was the case with Darwinism, with the rediscovery and restatement of that profound and simple doctrine of evolution which today illumines our view of all Nature's processes, from the changes within an atom to the formation of a solar system or the life of a human soul. Its scope was too wide, its fundamental concept too simple, to be perceived at once. A single bizarre detail was alone grasped by the popular mind, and for years evolution meant to many only an apparently ridiculous or rather blasphemous theory that man was the offspring of the ape. It was the case with Berkeley's idealism. It was, and is, the case with Christianity itself, the breadth of whose message is still hidden from us by the narrowing lenses of Hebraic legalism through which its early disciples viewed their Master's teaching. We cannot wonder, therefore, that like misconceptions have surrounded the purposes and principles upon which the Theosophical Society is based.

But however natural and inevitable these misconceptions may have been in the early days of the Society, the perspective of over a third of a century of consistent work gives little excuse for their continued existence. In this period the guiding principles and methods of the Society have been applied to widely varying fields of inquiry, and in these applications their significance and scope have been revealed. This is the way in which all general principles become clear to us. The axioms and postulates of Geometry, for instance, seem mere platitudes when given their bare abstract

statement, but when consecutively applied to problem after problem their meaning is brought home to us and we find that in their simple seeming statements the whole science of Geometry is contained. It was by this means also that the significance of the doctrine of evolution was learned. Now that it has been applied and tested in the mineral and vegetable as well as in the animal kingdoms, we perceive at once its simplicity and universal scope. The same is true of the principles upon which the Theosophical Society is founded, so that the self knowledge gained by repeated tests makes possible today a clearer statement of its aims, methods and character, than could have been given even by its most zealous adherents thirty years ago. For reasons which will become obvious to the reader of this article, no such statement, other than the very general one contained in the constitution of the Society, can be *authoritative* or official.* But as the Society's history speaks for itself, and as sixteen years of intimate participation in its affairs and councils enable me to write with at least the insight of personal knowledge, I have ventured to hope that I may dispel some of the misunderstanding which still surrounds its work.

I. The Conditions in the World of Thought at the Time the Society was Founded.

To understand any movement it is necessary to have some knowledge of the conditions in which it arose; and, in the case of the Theosophical Society, this takes us back to the year 1875, a time when the thought of the West was bitterly divided against exception, religious and scientific utterances. Religion was dominated dogmatism, and bitterness which then marked, with scarcely an itself. It is difficult for us to realize today the intense sectarianism, by theology, and science by materialism, and the age-long antagonism between the two had been fanned into the flame of fierce conflict by the spread of Darwinism with its popular misconceptions, and by the new light which the natural sciences had thrown upon the history of the earth. The letter of the religious law had been so completely confused with or substituted for its spirit, that to doubt a single theological tenet or the literal accuracy of an ancient Hebraic text seemed to put the whole reality of the religious life and nature in question; a question which the materialism of science answered with a blatant and chill negation. Neutrality was impossible. The choice seemed forced between the extremes of superstition and materialism, and, in consequence, religion was left without vitality, without the sense of immediate reality and the support of natural law. It seemed to concern only a problematical

* See By-law, page 221.

future beyond the grave, and in the resulting spiritual lethargy and indifference there grew the feeling that freedom to enjoy and to be comfortable was the aim of life. Science, on the other hand, was left without the assistance of a philosophy which saw the universe whole and took law and unity into the inner world of man's sentient life and consciousness. The tangible and the visible absorbed its attention, and the law which it saw enthroned in the physical realm found no recognition of dominion over the heart and destiny of man.

In this divided world and in the middle ground vacated by science and theology alike, had arisen the spiritualistic movement with its vast mass of remarkable phenomena, and the curious mixture of superstition and materialism put forward in explanation. The movement had spread with astonishing rapidity, and on every side men and women, ignorant of their dangers, were experimenting with hypnotic and trance states, and developing mediumistic and abnormal psychic conditions. Laughed at by science, regarded as blasphemous by orthodox religion, yet supported by an accumulation of testimony which could not be ignored, there was nothing to guide or balance the popular interpretation of these phenomena, and from them spread a concept of life after death as degrading to the soul as to the intelligence of those who held it.

Such, in brief, was the condition of religious thought in Europe and America. If we turn to the East, to India or Burma or Ceylon, we find a situation different but no less serious. The material power and success of the Western nations were diverting the East from its own truths. The fire of religious aspiration which had given the world its greatest scriptures—for Christianity, too, is of the East, not of the West—had burned low. The East seemed to sleep, its energies and vitality indrawn and unused, and where it stirred it was awakening to scepticism and unrest. It neither understood the West nor was understood by it. It could neither give nor receive of the best. The old channels of its thought and laws were broken and its life currents turning stagnant and bitter.

In a word both East and West, both religion and science, were suffering from *sectarianism*—from the separation of truths which should have been conjoined, from narrow, dogmatic misunderstandings and antagonisms. There was a crying need for a common neutral meeting place where all beliefs and views of life could come together.

II. The Purposes for which the Society was Founded.

It was to meet this need that the Theosophical Society was founded. It established an open platform where the adherents of

all creeds and of none could meet; where all views could come together and each could have full hearing; where an open mind would be encouraged and points of agreement rather than of disagreement might be found; where the West could be interpreted to the East and the East to the West; where the science of religion and the religion of science might learn each of the other's truth and of the greater truths behind them both; where every view of life, every type of mind and nature, might find sympathetic understanding and be helped to a deeper insight into its own truth and genius; where outlawed views, heretical views, views that could command no other hearing, could be given full expression and be judged, not from prejudice, but from merit; where the divided thought of the world might be fitted into the unity of Truth, and each facet find its proper place and part. It was, and is, an ideal infinitely ambitious, but also eminently practical. Its ultimate goal may be, as is the goal of life itself, forever beyond our reach, but the way to it was clear from the outset and each step forward is so much sheer gain.

III. The Society's Fundamental Rules.

It is clear that the success of such an undertaking must be dependent upon the absolute freedom and impartiality of the platform the Society maintained. Of itself it could have no creed, dogma, or personal authority to enforce or impose. Neither could it be held responsible for the opinions of its members. Its characteristics must be Breadth, Impartiality, Tolerance, Courtesy and Sympathy. It could exclude no one, be committed to no one. Therefore the first rule of membership, beyond that of sympathy with its chief purpose, is thus phrased in its constitution:

"Every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy, and to declare such belief or disbelief without affecting his standing as a member of the Society, each being required to show that tolerance of the opinions of others which he expects for his own."

And in the By-Laws we find this further statement:

"No member of the Theosophical Society shall promulgate or maintain any doctrine as being that advanced or advocated by the Society."

In these two rules are the indispensable and indisputable guarantees of the freedom and impartiality of the Theosophical Society. In view of the strictness with which they have been enforced, ignorance alone can account for the impression, still lingering in the public mind, that it is a new religious sect or "ism."

IV. A View of Life and of Truth Suggested by the Establishment of an Open Platform.

Behind and prompting all our acts lies some philosophy of life which consciously or unconsciously is ours, and which is at once revealed and judged by its fruits. There is truth as well as humour in the assertion that, however pessimistic his books may be, no author was ever at heart a pessimist. For no one would write did he not believe his thought could influence others, and to believe this is optimism pure and simple. Judged thus, the insistent silence of the Society, as such, upon all matters of opinion and belief is eloquent of the philosophy of spiritual freedom held by its founders. Breadth and tolerance are readily confused with indifference, and the open mind of the disciple, who has glimpsed the infinity of Truth, must often meet the charge of agnosticism from those who have been trained to believe that the whole meaning of life can be cramped into a single formula. But in the positive synthetic method of inquiry and procedure, established by the Society, is the answer to such criticism, and though each is free to interpret this method as he will, to me it appears a testimony to the belief in the oneness of Life and of Truth. That this philosophy of Unity and Spiritual Freedom was held by the founders of the Society is a matter of abundant record. In no way is it imposed upon the Society, but the purpose for which the Society was created is clarified by its light. It is a belief that the Universe is one and that life is whole; that the true self of each of us is one with the Self of the Universe. In Madame Blavatsky's fine phrase, it is the belief of "the fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Oversoul." Similarly it is a belief that all truths are aspects and facets of the Truth; that nothing is meaningless, nothing too humble or insignificant to have its part and place in the great whole; that each has something to contribute. And from this it follows that to reach toward the Truth, to grow in power and self-knowledge, is to grow into a positive unity; the way to which is through sympathy and synthesis and impersonality, looking always back through the veils of personality and differences to the central flame of genius which lights all human minds.

V. The Stated Objects of the Society.

The first stated object of the Society is expressive of this attitude toward life and truth. It is thus phrased.

"The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour."

It emphasizes the principle of spiritual unity and points the way to growth through sympathy, synthesis, and an open mind.

"The subsidiary objects are: *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study;* and *The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*"

The theosophical attitute of sympathy and synthesis, which, in the first object, was to be applied to individual views, is, in the second, extended to systems of thought. In it the Society entered upon the modern study of comparative Religion, but with this distinction, that whereas too often in the schools the chief stress is still laid on differences, in the Theosophical Society from its inception the aim has been to discover the common part, to find those central truths and laws of the soul life which are embodied in all religions, or to which all point, as the spokes of a wheel point to the hub. A very little of this study serves to demonstrate its importance; not only through the new light which a sympathetic appreciation of other religions throws upon one's own, but also through the revelation of the unanimity of personal testimony which the seers and prophets, the saints and mystics of all ages and of all races, have borne to the fundamental laws of the spiritual life. It is impossible to find the dawning truths of our own experience clearly recorded in the hieroglyphs of ancient Egypt, in the Sanscrit of the Upanishads, in the teachings of the Buddha, in the Gospel of Christ, in the writings of Molinos and in the visions of the Bienheureuse Marguerite Marie, without a deepening sense of their universal reality and profound significance. And it is far easier to obey the promptings of our inner guidance when we know the path along which it leads has been followed by the great of soul through the countless centuries of the past.

Through this study also the genius of the East grows clearer to our Western minds. We learn to see more than one side of the shield, and as we grow in understanding we grow in humility and the power of helpfulness, in the twin powers of giving and receiving. We learn that all forms and facets of the Truth are true each in its own way and degree, and that each is needed to supplement the others. So science needs philosophy and religion to set its genius free, to carry it beyond the realm of the concrete and the visible till its scope includes the whole of life. And religion in its turn needs science, needs above all that grave scientific spirit which puts all things to the test of experiment and experience.

It is to this undeveloped scientific realm, where the subject of experimentation escapes the balance and the scalpel, that the third object of the Society is directed. In its adoption we see the same

emphasis upon the wholeness of life, the same open mind and receptiveness to what is elsewhere ignored, that characterise the whole spirit of the Society. With the investigation of the psychical powers in man came the ability to offer many simpler and more rational explanations of the phenomena of spiritualism than were then current, and as the finer forces of nature were studied, both science and religion were profited,—religion to the extent that the laws and powers of the inner life were seen to be the reflection of universal laws and powers, and science to the extent that the energies of the ether were recognized as the source of all physical energy.

VI. The Theosophic Attitude.

These are the stated objects of the Society. Sympathy with the first alone is required of its members, for this constitutes an *intellectual attitude* toward life,—a turning toward the center—without which the work of the Society is meaningless and impossible. It is the attitude of open-minded sympathy and tolerance, of willingness to give and to receive, to profit from others as well as seeking to profit them. All who are willing to adopt this attitude are eligible for membership. They may hold any beliefs or disbeliefs. Their explanations of why this attitude is desirable or necessary may be infinitely various. They are committed to nothing in joining the Society save to sympathy with this first object and to the intellectual attitude it implies.

VII. The Theosophic Method.

If, holding this attitude, they desire to put it into practice and to take part in the work of the Society, they find a *practical method* for its accomplishment. It is the method of free discussion in the spirit of sympathy, courtesy and tolerance, each member contributing to the discussion, each willing to listen. It is the method following as the logical consequence of the theosophic attitude that all truth is valuable, and that every view has some significance. It presupposes that the essential element of inquiry and discussion is not the relative importance of this or that individual view and fragment of the truth, but the whole which is revealed as these views are synthesized and the fragments placed together. Therefore the discussions seek unities and not differences. But each opinion, however apparently at variance with the rest, must find some place in that unity,—must be given full and free opportunity for expression. This method cannot be long practised without the realization that one's own truth is not that fragmentary portion of opinion which is at any time cramped into our personal consciousness, but is some-

thing far larger and more symmetric; and we find its different aspects reflected back to us from the minds of others—enriching, widening, and clarifying our previous conceptions.

The subjects of discussion to which this method is applied are widely various. But as the method is one of synthesis, pointing always to the center, the subjects chosen habitually bear some relation to the source and seat of unity—to the spiritual life in which all souls find their oneness, or to the finer forces of nature of which the physical forces are differentiated transformations. The Theosophical Society is not a mere debating club.

The theosophic method is applied not only to the discussions at its Branch meetings, but also with great fruitfulness to the studies of its members. It furnishes an approach to a subject of study, and gives emphasis to fundamentals rather than to details. It is an impersonal method and its use helps to free us from preconceptions and to focus our attention wholly upon the search for truth.

The theosophic attitude and method constitute the outer aspect and life of the Theosophical Society. If they are adopted and persistently employed they lead to something further in its members, something which, ethically, is a spirit and, religiously, a life. But upon these we cannot now dwell.

VIII. The History of the Society.

The Theosophical Society was founded in New York City on November 17, 1875, by Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge, Colonel Olcott, and others, upon the principles and with the objects outlined above; the idea for such a society having been suggested by Madame Blavatsky, in conversation with Mr. Judge, on September 9th of the same year. The name of the society was derived from the Greek *Theosophia,* meaning literally divine wisdom, or wisdom of divine things, if to our understanding of the word wisdom we add the notion that it is applied, or put in practice; for this distinguishes the Greek *sophia* from *gnosis* or knowledge. Its title therefore suggests that the Society is not only to seek spiritual knowledge, but to put that knowledge into practice and use. The name has a long history, having been given to certain schools of philosophy in Egypt, and among the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics.

The Society adopted as its motto: *"There is no religion higher than Truth,"* which is said to have been the ancient family motto of the Maharajas of Benares. Thus the name of the Society comes to us through Greece and Egypt, and its motto from India.

The liberality, open mindedness, and scientific devotion to truth manifested by the Society, as well as the gifted personality of Madame Blavatsky, soon attracted a wide circle of brilliant intellect.

As was also to be expected, it drew genius whose orbit could not be calculated in advance, and many who could not elsewhere obtain a hearing. All were accorded complete freedom, fulness of opportunity, and perfect tolerance.

Local branches were organized for regular meetings and for putting in practice the theosophic method. Such branches were established in the chief cities of America, in England, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Norway and Sweden, in India, Australia and South America, so that nearly every nationality and form of belief were represented on its rolls. Magazines were started, through which the researches of the members might be made known and shared by others. A search through the early volumes of these publications shows the widest variety of topic. Christianity, Buddhism, Brahminism, Confucianism, Taoism, forgotten and obscure religious teachings, old philosophies banned as heretical by the early church; the phenomena of spiritualism, hypnotism, psychometry, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and mediumship; discussions and speculations upon ethnology and the early history of the human race; the application of the doctrine of evolution to religion and to the soul of man; new and original theories of the constitution of matter and of broader scientific principles—many of them anticipating recent discoveries—all these and many more were treated in their pages.

IX. A Scheme of Life Presented by Madame Blavatsky and Called Theosophy.

But most interesting of all, because of widest sweep and most profound conception, was the scheme of life—philosophy, science, and religion—put forward by Madame Blavatsky herself and as her contribution to the general symposium. The fundamental principles of this scheme were the same as those we have seen suggested as prompting the formation of the Society. It is not easy to summarize, even in crudest outline. It involved and stressed the unity of the Universe; the fundamental identity of all souls with the Oversoul; the universality of law; an endless evolution through recurring cycles of birth and death, guided by the laws of cause and effect,—an evolution in which man, as we know him, is by no means in the foremost rank; the growth of consciousness toward the enduring realization of its deeper self in a central unity; the view of all manifested things as differentiated aspects of one Reality, of all truths as reflections of the one Truth—so that all religions yield their greatest truth as we look back through them to what they image.

This Madame Blavatsky called Theosophy, associating it with the earlier systems that had borne that name and whose essential characteristics were the same. If we turn to the dictionary, seeking

a brief statement of these characteristics we shall be told that "Theosophy differs from Philosophy in that it starts from a transcendental apprehension of divinity to explain the manifested universe, and does not generalize from phenomena to the being and attributes of God"; and that "it differs from Mysticism in that it does not content itself with the relations of the soul to God, but speculates on the constitution and course of nature."

X. This Scheme to be Tested by Experience.

It is thus that Euclidean Geometry proceeds from its general axioms to their detailed applications. No explanation is given of the origin of these axioms. The test of their validity is in the consistency of the results which flow from them. Such also must be the test of all theosophical postulates and systems—the test of experiment, the test of the consistency and accuracy of the results which follow their application to the world as it may be known to experience. In view of this test the distinction between *sophia,* as *applied* wisdom, and *gnosis,* as knowledge, is doubly significant.

If this method of reasoning from universals to particulars is not that by which philosophic and scientific generalizations are made, it is at least the method by which science and philosophy, as well as religion, are taught. The student of chemistry is not made to travel the long and painful path by which its laws were first discovered. These laws are stated to him one by one, and he is led to test and verify them. He is not asked to believe in advance of the experiment, he is only told what results he should expect and where to look for the significance of what is occurring before his eyes. And yet a certain faith is demanded of him, for without some measure of faith the teacher's guidance would not be followed and the crucial experiment not performed.

This is quite clear to us in the teaching of physical science, where we can perceive that the teacher has a deeper knowledge than our own. But in the science of life itself, in the grave and serious alchemy of the soul, it is harder to trust. For here our own hearts and natures are the materials of experimentation, and we are slow to recognize that there are those who have a deeper knowledge of life than we yet share. If our view of human evolution were directed more to what man is becoming, than to those lower forms through which his organism has passed, it would be easier for us to believe that there are beings and sentient life beyond and above as well as below us. This was a cardinal point in Madame Blavatsky's philosophy, and if we could appreciate its significance we should understand better the method adopted by all religious teachers, who teach "As one having authority" and yet

say "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me," and who bid us "Be perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." It is through Madame Blavatsky's fulness of belief in the existence of spiritual teachers, in the continued presence in the world of "just men made perfect," that we may find the origin and explanation of her religious, philosophic and scientific system.

XI. Theosophy in its Larger Sense beyond Formal Definition.

To the exposition of this scheme of life Madame Blavatsky directed the greater part of her prodigious literary activity. By every means at her command she sought to direct men's minds toward it, pointing out unities of belief in all spiritual teaching, showing how each fitted into the skeleton plan she submitted, revealing meanings lying beneath the surface and within the words, challenging accepted scientific theories here, strengthening others there, correlating, synthesizing, retranslating and reinterpreting ancient scriptures, until Theosophy appeared as the foundation of them all. But never did she claim either to have originated what she offered, or that her own exposition did more than point the way. To her Theosophy was always beyond definition or formal statement. It was rather an attitude, a looking toward and growth toward the truth. In her conception truth was infinite and could only be known, unveiled and undistorted, by the soul which shares in infinitude. It could not be cramped and confined in words or offered as a formula to a narrow mind.

XII. The Many Expositions of Theosophy and the Dual Sense in which the Term is Used.

But even if incapable of being fully depicted, as a sphere cannot be mapped without distortion upon a plane, its fundamental principles and their applications could be at least partially elucidated. Many books, articles and pamphlets were written; approaching the subject, in accordance with the Society's method, from many different points of view. Among the more important of these works were the four ponderous and erudite volumes of Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine,* and her shorter and popular *Key to Theosophy,* as well as Mr. Sinnet's *Occult World* and *Esoteric Buddhism,* and Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy.* At the same time, or shortly following them, appeared a number of more personal treatises, such as *Light on the Path, The Voice of the Silence* and Mr. Judge's edition of the *Bhagavad Gita,* in which the same broad principles were applied to the individual life, and where directions were given which would test their validity.

As this expository literature multiplied, the name "Theosophy" came to be used in a two-fold sense. Chosen originally to designate those central truths, from which, in Madame Blavatsky's view, all religions were derived and to which all pointed, it became associated more particularly with her own attempts at its exposition. In the primary and literal sense of "wisdom of divine things," Theosophy denoted equally the wisdom of Christianity and of Buddhism and of science; standing for a synthesis beyond verbal formulation, but whose existence was perceivable through the theosophic attitude and method. In the secondary sense it was applied specifically to the new effort to restate and reinterpret certain elements of this synthsis. As a matter of fact we each of us use the word "truth" with precisely the same dual significance, meaning thereby both the universal truth in its infinite wholeness, and also that fragmentary and distorted portion of it which at any moment seems to us true opinion. To members of the Society, trained in the theosophic attitude and method, where truth is sought through synthesis, and all formal statements are regarded as but partial, this duality of meaning presented no difficulty. But to the world at large it has been a source of much confusion.

XIII. The Theosophical Society Neither was nor is Committed to Theosophy or to Any Other System of Thought.

Because of its consistency and wide scope, and also because of Madame Blavatsky's personal power and genius, her view of life won many adherents, both within and without the Theosophical Society. But—save to the extent that the fundamental concepts of this system are reflected also in the stated objects of the Society's constitution—the Theosophical Society is no more committed to Theosophy than to Buddhism or Christianity or spiritualism or modern science. All of these were discussed and elaborated and elucidated, in books and articles and branch meetings, as was Theosophy. All kinds of theories were presented and championed with the full power of those who held them, and with the fullest freedom of opportunity accorded by the Society. Each member was free to believe what he pleased, and if many believed in Madame Blavatsky's philosophy, so also did many believe in the views which the spiritualists then advocated. And where these systems differed and contradicted one another in certain fundamental particulars, each member made his own judgment. If more adopted the views of Madame Blavatsky, it was because these views seemed to them more illuminating; perhaps because of Madame Blavatsky's power as an expositor, perhaps because her exposition came nearer to the truth.

XIV. Freedom of Individuality the Key to the Society's History.

It is in this absolute freedom of individuality, in the fundamental rules embodied in the constitution of the Theosophical Society,—that every member can believe or disbelieve in what he will, that no member can commit the Society to any form of belief or disbelief, and that all views and all members are entitled to a full and respectful hearing,—that the key to the Society's history is found. Brilliant genius, great personalities, have arisen within it. Views of the most profound wisdom and the crassest folly have been advocated from its platform. Each has been given opportunity to prove what it was,—and the Society and the world have profited thereby.

XV. Madame Blavatsky's Psychic Phenomena.

One of the most common sources of the misconception that has surrounded the Society lies in the psychic phenomena which Madame Blavatsky exhibited on numerous occasions. Even by those who recognize the wisdom of giving courteous attention to all views of life, it is often asked why hospitality was accorded to these; why such a scheme of life as Theosophy should have been confused by association with the materialization of tea-cups and portraits, the precipitation of letters, or the transportation of material objects through space without apparent physical contact. The answer, from the point of view of the Society, is that Madame Blavatsky was what she was. They were her phenomena, not the Society's. Within the Society her brilliant genius, her psychic gifts of a very remarkable order, her great personal force and many personal peculiarities had free scope,—as had the genius and peculiarities of all other members. What her personal motives were, what her personal acts were, what her personal character was, could be of no official concern to the Theosophical Society. Whatever they were, as a member she had full right to them. Right or wrong, her views were entitled to a courteous hearing, and full liberty was due her to present and support them in her own way. Each member could agree or disagree, approve or disapprove in his personal capacity. But the Society as such could do neither. The Society explicitly declines all responsibility for the views of its members. Its brotherhood is without distinction and wholly impersonal, in order that individuality may have full freedom.

If it be the opinion of the querent that these phenomena were trivial and unworthy the expositor of such a philosophy as Madame Blavatsky put forth,—or if again they be regarded as impossible, and those who believe in them credulous dupes,—then still the answer of the Society is the same: Such considerations do not

concern us. Accept the phenomena or reject them. Whatever your decision it does not affect the Society. Nor yet does it affect the truth or falsity of her view of life. This stands quite apart from personality and must be judged upon its own merits. Does it explain life and the world as you know them? Does it appear to you as true? Does it meet your tests of truth? If so, accept it. If not, reject it. Or accept in part and reject in part. The Theosophical Society knows nothing of personalities.

But if the question be differently phrased, and directed, not to the Society, but to the personal opinion of some individual student, as to why such bizarre methods were adopted by Madame Blavatsky and these phenomena produced, then perhaps the querent might be reminded of the conditions in the thought of the world at the time the Society was founded. With these conditions we have dealt already, and it will be remembered that spiritualism was then a rising tide in Europe and America, supported by a vast mass of phenomenal testimony whose offered explanations were shot through and through with superstition and materialism. Madame Blavatsky hated superstition with all the intensity of her uncompromising character. To her all was law, and these phenomena but the manifestation of laws not yet generally understood, the action of finer forces of nature. She set out to prove that she could herself reproduce all the phenomena of spiritualism by the action of forces which, though supernormal, in the sense of being latent rather than developed in the majority of men, were by no means supernatural. This, we might be told, was her aim, and that to fair-minded judges the evidence proved her point. For all that Mrs. Piper and Eusapia Palladino and the investigators of psychic phenomena are doing today, Madame Blavatsky did a quarter of a century ago, adding to the production of the phenomena an explanation of their rationale which many have found logically consistent and intelligible.

Or again we might be told that in support of her effort to turn men's minds back to the reality and power of the inner world, and in her emphasis upon the potency of the finer forces of nature, it was valuable, indeed necessary, to give tangible demonstrations of the action of these forces. Let us for a moment, our informant might say, place ourselves in her position, and assume that we share her burning conviction, born of personal experience, that the long line of seers and mystics who had met their Master face to face, in vision or in daily intercourse, were not deluded; that Christ and Krishna and the Buddha, and all the greatest of all the past, had indeed entered into immortality, still lived and worked for men, to be known of those who loved them and who kept their commandments. Let us assume that we, too, had experienced the fulfilment of this promise, and that, because of it, knowledge and power which were

none of ours, save as they took the colour of our minds in passing through them, could be given by us to the world. Imagine ourselves thus, profoundly sensible of our great responsibility, setting forth upon our mission, alone, friendless, and without funds. Then let each ask what he would do, where and how he could obtain a hearing. For that cannot be given which will not be received. And to receive, a measure of faith is needed; not the blind faith of unquestioning belief, but that faith which leads to faithful trial and test. How win this faith from those who "have Moses and the Prophets" and hear them not? Would not we also have to show some sign of the power which such discipleship can command?

XVI. The Society's Impartiality and Impersonality Demonstrated in its History.

But whatever personal answer might conceivably be given by one or another of its members, the answer of the Society itself would be unchanged. The full liberty of its members to present their views in the way that seems best to them, the complete impersonality and impartiality of the Society as such, cannot be curtailed or abrogated. These principles of complete individual freedom and official impartiality have been demonstrated continuously throughout the Society's history. Again and again some member of unusual personal force and brilliancy has won by these gifts a large following within the Society's ranks. So long as such acceptance of leadership or of opinion is a matter of voluntary personal belief, it is as it should be. The Society's platform may be likened to the central tables in a great library upon which, in innumerable papers, the news of the spiritual world is spread. Each member is free to choose what he will and to accept what he will—and for this purpose was each such paper laid there, that to each might be given the widest possible opportunity for effect and usefulness. But when any member, or any faction, seeks to commit the Society as such to any view, to any belief, or to any person, then that member or faction is in conflict with the fundamental principles upon which the Society is established, and by this conflict is separated from its organism.

XVII. Mrs. Besant's Conflict with These Principles.

This was the case with Mrs. Besant,—also a woman of brilliant gifts, of great personal force, and many personal peculiarities. Departing from the fundamental principle of tolerance, she accused a fellow member, Mr. Judge, of deliberate misrepresentation in stating the sources of certain letters. As a matter of private personal opinion she was entitled to hold what view she pleased both as to the origin of these letters and of Mr. Judge. But when she made this view the basis of formal accusations of bad faith before the

governing body of the Society, and sought to compel this body to institute a formal trial of Mr. Judge and decide between her view and his, she not only violated the primary rule of tolerance, but placed herself in conflict with the fundamental principles of individual freedom and the impartiality and impersonality of the Society's constitution.

Mr. Judge took his stand squarely on these principles. He refused utterly to explain or defend his view before such a court, contending that it was a question of his personal opinion, and, right or wrong, concerned the Society not at all. Should the Society as such try him formally, it would commit itself to one or another of two perfectly definite beliefs. It would not matter what judgment was rendered; any decision, other than that of lack of jurisdiction, would destroy the free and impartial character of the Theosophical Society. Each member was free to believe or disbelieve in his views, or to hold what opinion of him each might deem just, but the Society as such could not commit itself. The weight of this argument was immediately recognized, and the formal court of inquiry, which Mrs. Besant had sought to institute, was abandoned.

If it be asked today: "Were these letters from the source Mr. Judge claimed?" the reply, from the point of view of the Theosopical Society, must be precisely that upon which he himself insisted. It is impossible for the Society, as a Society, to pass judgment. Even if the personal opinion of some individual member were sought, a like confession of incompetence might be evoked. But by none who knew Mr. Judge's sterling honesty and life long devotion to the search for truth, would his personal sincerity and integrity be questioned; and there are many, cognizant of the facts and trained in discrimination, who would answer with an unqualified affirmative: "Yes. For myself I know of my own knowledge, and am entirely convinced."

Yet the circumstances, and Mrs. Besant's nature, were such that suspicion and calumny took deep hold upon her, and, persisting in them and in her accusations, she and her following departed from the fundamental principles of the Society's life, and thus, though still using its name, separated themselves from its living organism. The orbit of her personal genius passed without the Society, carrying in its train—to psychic investigation and to a crystalized sectarian philosophy,—a large number of its former members. But the principles and freedom of the Theosophical Society remained inviolate.

XVIII. Mrs. Tingley's Conflict with These Principles.

The inherent vitality and strength of these principles were demonstrated in the case of still a third woman of remarkable gifts and powers, who led what was generally considered a rather theatrical

crusade around the world, using the name of the Society and for the promulgation of her understanding of Theosophy. In so doing she was entirely within her rights, as were those who followed and supported her. Whether her methods were good, bad, or indifferent, necessary or unnecessary, is, from the theosophical standpoint, wholly immaterial. It was the expression of her genius, and as such was good.

But when upon her return, flushed with her remarkable success, and uplifted by the adulation of her personal following, she sought to dominate a convention of the Society and enforce a pledge from its free membership to adopt her as its leader and to follow where she led, she was then in conflict with the fundamental principles of the Theosophical Society, and she and her following passed from out its ranks.

Many more instances might be given illustrative of the inviolability of the Society's guarantees of freedom and impartiality. From the Theosophical Society, as from a great ante-room, many doors are open. And those who have passed out, alone or taking others with them, whether to what they regard as some higher, better chamber, or, in disappointment, back whence they came, have still rendered to the Society deep and lasting service. Graditude is due them not only for their contributions as members—for the play and fruits of their genius and the sincerity of their views—but also for their leaving; for raising issues which revealed with added clearness the principles upon which the Society rests, and for the demonstration these issues offered of the enduring stability of its foundation. In the Theosophical Society, where learning is through freedom of opinion, and sympathy and synthesis of views, and the object of learning is the Self, failure and success, folly and wisdom, weakness and strength alike have had their lesson. However many departed, to however many offshoots it gave birth, the free Society remained, fulfilling its original purposes, carrying out its fundamental principles, true to its appointed destiny. And from all it gained.

XIX. The History of the Society as Written in the Thought of the World.

From even such a cursory review as this, we must return convinced that the true history of the Theosophical Society is neither in the history of its organization, nor of the personalities that have risen to prominence within it, but is rather in the growth and development of the principles which it embodies. We have seen that these constitute an intellectual attitude and a practical method, which the Society has made its own, but whose record must be sought in the thought of the world. Have they there grown and born fruit?

To answer this question it is only necessary to contrast the con-

ditions of today with those of 1875. The sectarianism which then characterized all our thinking has given place to a more liberal spirit. On all sides old barriers have fallen, and what were formerly regarded as separate fields of knowledge have been recognized as one. Nowhere has this been more marked than in the great scientific discoveries of the last thirty years. Today each science leans on all the others. Chemistry and physics have interblended and illumined one the other; and by their twin processes we have penetrated deep into the mystery of the atom, as a man may descend a stair, placing his weight first on one foot and then upon the other. Or again they have lent their joint aid to astronomy, till through the photographic plate and spectroscopic analysis we have learned of invisible stars and recognized the elements flaming in the aura of the sun. Or still again they have been made instruments for the study of biology, and in turn have been themselves profoundly affected by the observations of stellar phenomena and by the doctrine of evolution arising from biological research. It is, indeed, precisely where the barriers have fallen, and two streams of thought have poured their waters into one, that the greatest progress has been made. Problems which had proved stubborn and insoluble to direct attack, easily yielded their secret when the angle of approach was shifted and the light of other knowledge brought to bear upon them. The advance of science has been a testimony to the power and fruitfulness of the theosophic attitude and method.

It is noteworthy also that this advance has been in the direction indicated by the third object of the Society. Thirty-four years ago our knowledge of the ether was in its infancy; today it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that we know more of it than of any other form of matter. In this invisible, intangible medium we have found the source and seat of all electrical and chemical energy, and the tremendous potency of its forces, locked within a single atom, runs into figures we can express but hardly comprehend. We have come to realize that the visible and tangible is rather an effect than a cause, a shifting shadow and appearance of what is permanent, rather than its substance. And with this growing knowledge of Nature's finer forces, the old materialism of science is losing both its meaning and its hold.

The change of attitude in orthodox religion has been scarcely less revolutionary. The old dogmatic tone seems strange and alien to our modern thought. Sectarian strife and bitterness have given way to a more liberal spirit and the recognition of a common aim. Wider acquaintance with the Eastern scriptures has brought a clearer perception of the unity of theme and of testimony in all great religious systems; and from this has come a deepening sense of the reality of spiritual law. Science is no longer regarded as the enemy of

religion, but rather as one who, if he would, could be her chief interpreter. Unseeing materialism and unreasoning superstition, arrayed though they be one against the other, go hand in hand, and must together pass away. In the development of religious thought, no less than in science, the theosophic attitude and method have been operative and have proved their worth.

No greater triumph can come to any man of generous spirit than to see the ideals, for which he has long striven, triumphing in the world around him. Such a man will have no thought of self, for his personality has been sunk in the cause he serves. He will care little whether his own part was great or small, so long as he knows he did his best. The degree of personal credit which should accrue to him is a question he leaves to other minds. But it is a question which other minds are sure to ask, and which arises with regard to the Theosophical Society. Granted that the world has moved, granted, too, that its movement has been in the direction of the Society's ideals, and that the use of the theosophic attitude and method has played an important part in its progress, the question still remains: how much of this is due to the Society itself?

The answer falls under three main heads:

First, the Society must be credited with being the self-conscious exponent of the principles which are triumphing, with being the conscious leader of what has been otherwise a largely unconscious movement. We have seen that a third of a century ago the Society advocated and adopted an attitude and method totally at variance with the general thought of the time. Through all the vicissitudes of its history it has maintained these inviolate, and has continuously labored to advance certain ideals of freedom, tolerance, synthesis, and unity. The world has followed; so that, in this direction, the Theosophical Society has led its evolution. It has not been the leadership of authority, for "the Theosophical Society has no personal authority to enforce or impose." But it has been that true leadership which wider vision, and stronger, conscious purpose can never fail to wield, even though those whom it guides do not recognize its presence.

Second, by inspiring its own members and giving freedom and opportunity to their genius, the Society has contributed, through them, directly to the change in the thought of world. To be treated adequately this heading would need both subdivision and amplification, for it covers a far wider field than is generally supposed. The extent and variety of the Society's literary output have been already mentioned, and it was stated that in these books and articles many recent scientific theories and discoveries had been anticipated. It is quite true that for the most part they had been reached by other methods than those of modern science, and there is a wide gap between the enunciation

of a scientific hypothesis and its experimental verification. But to formulate a theory which is capable of the substantiation it later receives, is to render a service which can only be fully appreciated by the scientist who has confronted masses of phenomena to whose significance he has no clue. His difficulty is more often the stating of his problem than its solution, and once a clear statement is given him the thread is in his hands.

It is this quality of suggestiveness which characterizes Madame Blavatsky's books to a most unusual degree, and which constitutes a large part of the value of other papers in the Society's transactions. It is difficult to estimate the extent of its influence, as it would be difficult to determine what portion of the credit for our present submarine torpedo boats is properly ascribable to Jules Verne's conception in *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea.* He created a demand, quickening the imaginations of many men, skilled as perhaps he was not, until this demand was met, and through their persistent, collective labor his Nautilus became a fact.

But the Society's contributions to science have not been limited to mere suggestiveness and the creating of a demand, for it has numbered among its members those who have played no small part in scientific progress. To mention the names of Alfred Russel Wallace, Camille Flammarion, Thomas Edison, or Sir William Crookes, is to prove this point without further comment. Yet, in view of Sir William Crookes' acknowledgment of his indebtedness to Madame Blavatsky, it is interesting to note that from his experiments in "radiant matter" have come all the later discoveries of the X-rays, the *Alpha* and *Beta* rays, and the phenomena of radio-activity which have revolutionized our view of all material substance.

The Society's direct contribution to the development and change in religious thought are even more easily traceable, as should have been made apparent by what has already been said of its activity in the study of comparative religion and in the popularization and interpretation of Eastern scriptures. Here also it both created a demand and did much to aid in its fulfilment. Greatest of all its contributions, however, was the demonstration it offered that sectarianism was not the basis of religion, but that our perception of spiritual law, as of natural law, was clarified by liberality and breadth of view. The spirit of such books as James' *Varieties of Religious Experience,* or Fielding Hall's *Inward Light* and *The Soul of a People,* or those two remarkable volumes by an unknown author, *The Creed of Christ* and *The Creed of Buddha,* is the logical outcome of the pioneer work of the Society's members, and, but for it, would scarcely be possible today. In like manner the seed of the whole modernist movement in theology may be found in the view of the nature of truth which underlies the theosophic attitude and method.

As the third factor in its contribution must be reckoned *the indirect effect the Society has had upon other organizations,* in that many of its members have felt it their duty to take an active part in the civic, religious and scientific movements around them and to infuse these with the spirit of the thesophic attitude and method. The absolutely unsectarian character of the Theosophical Society is nowhere demonstrated more clearly than in its influence upon its own members. There has been no proselytizing, and very little weaning away from old forms of faith. More often has each member gained from its discussions a clearer perception of the truth his own creed reflects. The Christian has been made a better Christian, the Buddhist a better Buddhist by the recognition of their common tenets. It is strange that this could ever have been doubted, for when was a man's faith shaken by the discovery that another shared his belief in its truth?

To this freedom from the proselytizing spirit the Society owes a large part of its influence. Its members have remained scattered in all forms of denominational organization and have entered freely into the activities of the time, spreading the theosophic spirit and working "as the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump." The Society has not aimed to become a large and powerful organization. To have done so would have been to defeat its own purpose. It seeks to be the nucleus of a *universal* brotherhood, by radiating and infusing the spirit of brotherhood throughout the entire world.

XX. The Theosophic Spirit.

As the essence of the Theosophical Society is intellectually an attitude and practically a method, so, ethically, it is a spirit, which is quickened by assuming the attitude and practising the method, but which then becomes their basis. Just as, when children, we were told that if we would look pleasant and act kindly we would find the feelings of pleasure and kindliness springing up within us till their spirit became our own, so this theosophic spirit is first born of its expressions and then becomes their origin. It is the wholeness of spirit which comes with the perception of the unity of life. In our relations with other men it shows as brotherliness, as sympathy and respect for their individuality. For the spirit of Christ's commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves, and of Buddha's teaching of compassion, is not other than the theosophic spirit taken into the realm of ethical conduct.

To understand this spirit it is only necessary to understand the philosophy of unity and spiritual freedom which we have seen indicated in the stated objects of the Society. If we become indeed convinced of "the fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Oversoul," that the universe is one, and that life is whole, our

view both of ourselves and of others undergoes a profound change. With Emerson we perceive that "we are open on one side to all the attributes of God. There is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases and God, the Cause, begins. The walls are taken away." These walls are the barriers of personality; and when they have fallen we no longer see ourselves isolated and separate from the whole of which we are a part. We no longer seek to found our lives upon personal ambition or personal self-indulgence, for we have had a vision of a self transcending personality. We begin to live from within, rather than by external stimulus and reaction from an outer environment. We begin to find in "the attributes of God" a limitless source of power which can act through us, giving to the performance of the smallest duty a certain universal coloring and significance.

I remember once listening to an army officer tell of his experience when in absolute control of an isolated district in the tropics. His word was law, from which there was no appeal. Surely, he said, if man can be free to follow his own will, he was free then. Yet never was his personal will more negligible, never had he been compelled to set his personality so wholly aside. Case after case would be brought to him, by enemies and friends alike, for judgment; but into his decisions he found no personal prejudice or opinion could enter. It was the universal quality of justice which must judge through him. He was bound hand and foot by his traditions and ideals. And this, he told me, had been to him a revelation of himself. Most men he fancied, viewed themselves as he had done, as a congeries of personal likes and dislikes, of ambitions and hopes and fears, together with a certain personal will to be true to the good as it appeared to them. But in the light of such experience he saw this "good" no longer as something imposed upon man, but as his truer, deeper self, and this congeries of personal qualities as but a mask through which this Self must speak.

When the personality is thus seen in its literal significance, as that through which a greater voice must sound, we come close to a realization of the ethical spirit of theosophy. Those whom it animates gradually become, in their own being, part of the great moral order, their wills attuned to the Divine Will, their righteousness the Breath of the Eternal Spirit, their lives the Word made flesh. To such the obligation of ethics is the demand of self consistency, and its basis is the nature of the Soul.

XXI. The Theosophic Life.

Thus that which is intellectually an attitude, practically a method, and ethically a spirit, develops into what is, religiously, a life. It is a life of service, at once of meditation and of ceaseless activity.

For within and above man is infinite power and around him is infinite need. His outer life stands as the finite link between the two, but in the inner life he recognizes his oneness with them both. Of himself he can neither give nor claim, but through him the infinite may answer to the infinite.

It is a life of growth,—of growth toward the deeper Self and central Oversoul. As the mind is turned toward the Truth behind all truths, as the principle of spiritual unity is made active in our dealings with others, as the individual will is attuned to the Divine Will, the old limitations of consciousness are little by little transcended, and the nature transformed. We see new richness and meaning in life, and that which before seemed cold and distant is suddenly perceived glowing within our own hearts and vibrant with spiritual light. The kingdom of the heavens is seen as indeed "at hand," to be entered here and now by those who have at once the courage and the strength.

Above all it is a life of communion—a deepening sense of companionship with the great of soul. It is not alone that high communion which Dante depicts in the Elysian fields, where the sublime sages of the pagan past, grave and reverend and noble men, walk and converse together, but where over all is a grey mist, and their figures are dim and vague. Rather is it touched with the rapture of his paradise, and lit by the light, however distant, of the flaming heart of the rose; for it is the communion of love. Such a communion did Christ promise to those who loved Him. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

The test of any scheme or philosophy of life lies in living it, and its significance is the life to which it leads. So in the theosophic life is the deepest significance and test of the principles upon which the Theosophical Society is founded. Because of this, and because the inspiration and vitality of the theosophical movement flow in large part from its ethical spirit and religious life, we have touched upon them here. But they concern the esoteric rather than the exoteric aspect of the movement, and are not properly dealt with as part of its organism. The great exoteric Society is wholly free. Its members may accept or reject what they will of ethical spirit or religious life. The Theosophical Society, as such, implies only an attitude and a method; and to these it has been unfalteringly true.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY.

BEFORE going further into the subject of this paper, it may be well to state that it is not purposed to attempt to explain either Theosophy or Christianity, but to indicate a method whereby we may be helped towards an understanding of either one, or both.

There are two main aspects in which we may consider the question:

The first aspect is the analytical mode; that is to say, by considering the *difference* between Theosophy and Christianity.

The second aspect is the synthetic method; that is to say, consideration of the underlying identity of Theosophy and Christianity.

In the present brief paper we shall glance succinctly at both these aspects; they represent the polar extremes of one truth.

Before we enter upon these polar aspects, however, we must first define what we mean by the words "Theosophy" and "Christianity," respectively.

The latter term—the word "Christianity" is of simple definition. The term represents that aspect of truth which was taught by Jesus of Nazareth—whom some men called "The Christ," the Founder of the true Christianity, pure and undefiled. Of his teaching we have today only fragmentary portions, which portions,—so far as the public at large has them,—have passed through the prism of various minds; the minds, for the most part, of simple and uneducated—uninstructed—men; and, at much later dates, from one to another language or languages, under the intellectual criticism of scholars, and the bias of some among churchmen.

The term "Theosophy" is of no less simple definition. But people in general greatly misunderstand the meaning and scope of the word. Just as the Christianity of our day differs greatly from that of the era which saw the birth of this great religion, so Theosophy also differs from the popular idea of it. The term is misapplied to a definite series of ideas, to a fixed belief or creed. Yet Theosophy has no creed, but throws an impartial light upon all Life and all thought: to it, Life is the universal shrine of light and truth.

Those portions of the esoteric teachings, both religious and scientific, of the East, which were put forward by Mme. Blavatsky and also expounded by Mr. Sinnett, Mr. W. Q. Judge and others,

have been rounded into a creed and styled "Theosophy" by the public at large. When the subject was newly reborn and startled the century just past, this rough and ready misconception was passed over, without much objection, in the rush and fervour of propaganda and other work. Pioneers work axe in hand, clearing away dense and well nigh impenetrable and insurmountable obstructions to the passage of life and light, and as such workers, they are obliged to tolerate much which the calm survey of a less strenuous period must gradually remove.

That it was not the purpose of the Pioneer of last century,—Mme. Blavatsky,—to found a new creed, is shown conclusively by her statement in the *Key to Theosophy*. In a closing chapter, devoted to the consideration of "The Future of the Theosophical Society," Mme. Blavatsky says:

"Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biassed by some or all of these influences——."

To the further question as to what will occur if this danger can be averted, the author says:

"Then the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty, and Philanthropy. Slowly but surely it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices: it will break down racial and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realisation of the Brotherhood of all men. Through its teaching, through the philosophy which it has rendered accessible and intelligible to the modern mind, the West will learn to understand and appreciate the East at its true value."

The author then follows on with a description of further results of the spread of theosophical teaching, but enough has been quoted to show that she specifically warned us of the dangers of a lapse into a creed.

Prolonged study of the works written by this Pioneer, makes clear the point that Mme. Blavatsky had two things in mind.

First: To establish a Theosophical Society based upon certain fundamental and universal truths.

Second: To contribute to the specific study of religions certain ancient data quite lost to our era, and unknown, practically to the whole western world.

In striking the key-note of universal Truth for the last century, Mme. Blavatsky strongly insisted upon three points.

1. That the universe is pervaded by a universal, omnipresent and boundless Principle of Life. This point establishes, if followed up, the truth of Re-incarnation.

2. The universal prevalence of the Law of Periodicity, of flux and reflux. This point leads on to the Law of Karma.

3. The identity of all souls with the Oversoul. This point establishes the truth of Universal Brotherhood. It is nowhere stated by her that the term "all souls" comprises the human race alone. Nor is her ideal Brotherhood confined to the plane of physical life; on the contrary it is universal, hence spiritual.

In putting forward these three universal Principles, side by side with the injunction that Theosophy should not be hardened into a creed, we are naturally led to the conclusion that there *is* a fundamental identity—a reality—underlying all religions and sciences; that Science is really the study and art of Life itself, and that Religion is the study of the Life and aspirations of the Soul. A deeper study and insight demonstrates that Life and the Soul are one and the same—the Soul being, as it were, a nucleus of centralised, organised and individualised Life, each Soul being, as it were, a spark of the Oversoul. Since these universal truths are to be found underlying all religions, we cannot claim that they of themselves constitute Theosophy, *or* Christianity. They are universal both in action and in application. *Theosophia* is the wisdom of the gods; or wisdom about God; or Divine Wisdom—call it as you will; the fact remains that many students amongst us think that we can best explain our use of the term "Theosophy" by saying that it is a spirit of Life, a way of looking at and of investigating all Life in the light of the fundamental unity of Being, as well as a way of living the Life. In short, the Theosophy of the thoughtful student is *a spirit of unity* applied to the study and the action of Life as a whole. In this spirit we can study Life both by analysis and by synthesis. Analysis individualises—for the purpose of the moment, of the next step, that which must afterwards be synthesised for the purposes of the whole; it is in the light of unity that our view is rounded and made entire.

Let us take, for the sake of illustration, this question of Theosophy and Christianity. The public at large is often found to suppose that a member of the T. S. would naturally compare the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine* and other books of the eastern wisdom with

the teachings of the Bible of the West, and would insist upon the fundamental *differences* between them as differences between two creeds or articles of belief, and would then go on to demonstrate the superiority of his *own* mode of belief. This erroneous idea outlines the method of the bigot and the fanatic, and is a method which has divided mankind and has been productive of the most bitter wars and the most hideous cruelties known to history, perpetrated by man upon mankind. Already in the sweet light which we now see spreading slowly but steadily over the West (the light of charity and the concept of unity), this error of thought is gradually passing away. We are coming to understand that the true theosophist is he who remembers that the Principle of Life is omnipresent, eternal, divine. Hence it is all wise and everywhere to be found; is conscious and beneficent; working always in the law that makes for righteousness; evolving, uplifting, unifying and sustaining all. This truth being present to his understanding, it would gradually penetrate to his heart, finding there the intuitive faith of the heart in the unity of Life. In such wise would he study all religions, with a view to discerning—not their points of difference, but their oneness in teaching of the divine eternal Life and of the Soul. The hair-splitting of creeds would be a thing utterly foreign to his thought; as he became more and more wise in study, in Life, in experience. He would carry this method into all the daily acts of his individual life, dealing with that life and its contact with other lives from this standpoint of their fundamental identity: identity of origin in the Great Ocean of Spirit; identity of goal in the conscious enrichment of Being and return to the Divine Bourne of the Oversoul; identity of experience as well, now and here, in that all human beings are alike subject to the Law of Evolution, and every atom and ion of Cosmos must be subject to it as well. In this way our interest is identical and we are all bound together by this fact of our physical, psychic and spiritual Evolution; we have identity of experience and of our larger Life. Evolving on the one hand, we involve or draw in, on the other hand, that spiritual Life which we individualise and render self-conscious within us, furthering thus that return to the Father which was taught by Jesus the Christ.

Christianity, when viewed in the spirit of synthesis, of Theosophy, is seen to be one of the great World-Religions. And, as such, it is of especial interest as being that aspect of the One Truth which is largely accepted by the world in which we live today—the western world. To the West, and to its forms of Thought we have under Karma a duty, for Karma placed us *there*. We are aware that it is impossible to reduce the movement of spiritual Life to a formula or to imprison it in a creed. Our studies have accus-

tomed us to take into account the periodic returns of the religious spirit, and to see the movement of the Law underlying these periodic manifestations as one always governing them and the Great Teachers which that Law calls forth. Each such Teacher has been obliged, in the nature of things, to specialise, to lay stress upon some one of the many aspects of Truth. Thus it has been said that Krishna taught Devotion. Buddha taught Brotherhood, love of all men and of all creatures. Jesus combined the two, but the distinctive note of his teaching was the relation of son to father between Man and Divinity. We can now see that if we study the teaching of Jesus *along this line,* we shall fathom many a point which at first seems either too obscure or too trite when interpreted by some credal obligation. The Christian Gospels are full of the ideas and the ideals known to all theosophical students, once we take hold of this clue. And how should it be otherwise if we are to view the Evolution of the religious nature of Mankind as a fact? Must it not be that there exists a body of divine men who have the evolution of the human soul closely at heart, and who are moved from time to time by the holy Spirit of Life—by God, as we Christians say—to work upon the visible plane as well as behind the veil of Nature, for the spiritual welfare of Man? As cycles and periods alter, as Humanity comes under the operation of periodic Law, the teachings given for the evolution of the human mind and the human soul into the divine soul must inevitably change their *aspects,* but they are forever and fundamentally one and the same. Each Great Teacher has given his disciples to understand that beyond the main aspects of his teaching were other aspects no less great, so that tolerance, charity, compassion, liberality of mind and entire sweetness of heart—a spirit of unity, in short—must prevail among men who desired to learn the god-like wisdom, the Truth about God. Buddha taught this truth by his silence when certain questions were asked of him: Jesus taught it when He said that his Father's house has many mansions, which mansions many of us understand to represent states of Consciousness. There are many other sayings of the Great Founder of Christianity which are less overlaid by the obscurities of time and much confusion of thought and of facts. As a help to such study, two books published of late are almost unequalled in the clearness and the helpful quality of their suggestive thought. *The Creed of Christ* and *The Creed of Buddha* are written by an author whose name is unknown to the world at large. Those who *do* know it tell us that this writer is not a Theosophist. But surely no mind so enlightened as that which illuminates the pages of these profoundly interesting and helpful books can be other than truly theosophical in the real sense. Each Great Teacher of Religion

must have in mind the limitations of the era in which he appears upon the human scene, and must suit his teachings to the necessity of removing these especial crystallisations of human thought before his teachings can take effect. In this way the teachings, read at some much later period of time, and by men whose very modes of thought are different, may appear to disagree. But the synthetic method with its spirit of unity, and the tolerance of a wider outlook upon Life, puts an end to discord; behind the apparent diversity we discover the fundamental identity with the other Religions which we have studied and in this way we draw nearer to the happy discovery that the Spirit of Religion is ever one and the same, no matter what *aspect* of that Spirit and Its Laws may be presented to the minds of men in any given era.

We can take up the study of Christianity in this spirit—and what study can be more important to us as Theosophists than the Religion of the world in which we are now embodied and to which we owe a duty, the duty of assisting the further Evolution of its religious instincts (in which we must include our own) and its search for the Soul and the life of the Soul? We are wise if we speak in the religious terminology best known to the West, and if we seek within the Scriptures which are our present birthright, the divine truths of all religions and of all Time. If we cannot find them there, we can find them nowhere, for Karma, regulating the movement of the Law of Periodicity, has placed us where we can find with ease and spread with love the spiritual food best suited to our present needs and the needs of our generation. That Law of Periodicity, of flux and reflux, we must remember governs all the occurrences of each human life, as well as the action of the worlds in space: it has placed us where the light of Theosophy has come to us, to aid our search and to broaden our ideas. We should be the interpreters of Religions, able to reveal to each religionist some truth as yet undiscovered by him within his own Religion, something beautiful and holy which unites him to all the religious aspirations of his era, and all eras. What a high office, to thus hold up the torch of Truth, assisting the spread of those soft and gentle rays which ever seek to penetrate the hearts of men, assuring us of the unity of Life, of the omnipresence of the Law of Love!

Many of us believe the doctrine of Avatars to be one of the great truths; that the Spirit of Divine Truth has its especial incarnations, from time to time, overshadowing or indwelling with the great spiritual Teachers. We look upon these holy ones as Masters, as Members of the Spiritual Lodge, and believe that Jesus the Christ was one of those. When we search the Scriptures put forth in His name, we are naturally guided by the clue of this fundamental

identity of all Religions. Hence we discover within these Scriptures, statements of spiritual laws. Who can read the Sermon on the Mount without being struck with its revelations of Karma; of the laws governing spiritual action; of the nature of the One Substance and the Soul? Who but finds in the Parables the teaching of the Principles? Who but recognises the Voice speaking through those pages, as the *Voice of the Silence,* and what is their Light but the *Light on the Path?* Let us then study those Scriptures themselves, fragmentary though they be, rather than the creeds and the ideas of other men about them: let us study and reflect for ourselves at first hand. Let us do this in the spirit of devotion and meditation, conscious that there is a true and sufficient reason why this Religion of the West has been put forward and embraced by the peoples of the present era, in this, our western world. Then the exquisite spirit and love of that Master of Compassion whom we name as Jesus, in all its human sympathy and god-like self-sacrifice shall penetrate our darkened understandings as a light from the inner heavens, and we shall see in part why that life which seemed to fail so utterly was in its sacrifice and complete surrender the greatest triumph which the heart can conceive. Surely we shall then comprehend that One who endured to the end in order to carry to mankind the appointed teaching in the appointed time of that God Who so loves the world that He sends from era to era His beloved Sons to bless and save those who will accept the gift of spiritual food so freely offered—that One such as this could never leave us straying in the wilderness of this earthy world, and must be with us in spirit and in immanent Compassion and aid, "to the end of the world," even as He promised to be. By the light of the theosophical spirit we shall see that this which now we call "Theosophy" is the very Soul and core of His teaching; that the spirit of Christianity and of Theosophy is one and the same, and that every Religion has one identical object. That object—and each one of us may make it his own—that object is:

THE RESTORATION OF THE CHRIST.

JASPER NIEMAND.

FEAR IN CALVIN'S THEOLOGY:

ITS ORIGIN AND CHARACTER.

DURING the centuries immediately preceding the Protestant Revolution the social, political, and religious institutions of Europe had been passing through a series of transitions. These transitions were not the effect of a smooth and normal growth, but came about by means of violent and often apparently unconnected disruptions. Society was everywhere unsettled. Insecurity in state and church was the rule.

Mr. Robinson writes: "War, in all its forms, was the law of the feudal world. War formed the chief occupation of the restless aristocracy who held the land and exercised the governmental control. The inveterate habits of a military race, the discord provoked by ill-defined rights or by self-interest and covetousness, all led to constant bloody struggles in which each lord had for his enemies all those about him. An enterprising vassal was likely to make war at least once, first, upon each of his several lords; secondly, upon the bishops and abbots with whom he was brought into contact, and whose control he particularly disliked; thirdly, upon his fellow vassals; and lastly, upon his own vassals. The feudal bonds, instead of offering a guarantee of peace and concord, appear to have been a constant cause of violent conflict. Every one was bent upon profiting by the permanent or temporary weakness of his neighbor. This chronic dissension extended even to members of the same family; the son, anxious to enjoy a part of his heritage immediately, warred against his father, younger brothers against older, and nephews against uncles who might seek to deprive them of their rights." [1]

Neighborhood war was regarded as a necessity of society as it then existed. Neither the French code of laws of the thirteenth century, nor the Golden Bull, drawn up for Germany in 1356, prohibited war. They merely stipulated that it should be carried on in what was then considered to be a humane and gentlemanly manner. [2] Moreover, the playtime of the period was filled out with jousts and tourneys, diminutive battles to beguile the time between real wars, in which even kings took part. [3]

In France the experiences of the Hundred Years' War with England, successive revolts of the feudal lords and the weakness of

[1] Robinson, *Introduction to the History of Western Europe;* Boston, 1903, Chap. 9, p. 117.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid,* Chap. 9, p. 118.

the nominal monarchs were followed by a great increase in the power of the king, and the organization of a standing army to enforce it. England solved the problems of the time similarly. Three centuries of intermittent warfare in the conquest of Wales and of Scotland, the Hundred Years' War with France, the Wars of the Roses, the breaking up of the old manor system, revolts of the peasants—these and other social upheavals led to the centralization of the three nations of Great Britain under a single head, and to the despotism of the Tudor kings.

In Germany and Italy the situation assumed a different aspect. Disruption took hold of the very foundations of the social system. In the period immediately preceding the Protestant Revolution in Germany, the land was divided into states of different sizes, all tangled up with one another, which were regarded as the private property of their rulers, and which might be subdivided and apportioned among several children regardless of the preferences of the inhabitants. "From the thirteenth century down to Napoleon's time there was no Germany in a political sense, but only a great number of practically independent states, great and small." [4]

Nor was the Imperial Court adequate to maintain order. This court followed the Emperor about and even in cases where decisions were reached had no power to enforce them. During the Great Interregnum (1250-1273) the electors sold the crown to two instead of to one claimant—both foreigners—thereby increasing their revenues, but paralysing the already crippled central authority. At the same time the four electors of the Rhine divided the imperial domain which lay on both sides of that river among themselves. [5] The desperateness of the situation forced the nobles and commercial cities to form leagues for the protection of interests which would otherwise have perished.

In Italy matters were even worse. Like Germany in the lack of an effective central power, the greater instability and emotional intensity of the national character led to even more extreme results. "There never was an epoch where party spirit was so bitter, when man was more precipitate in his action either good or evil, or when the human soul vibrated more tensely and carried its feelings, whether noble or depraved, to greater lengths." [6] Local tyrannies based on family politics or on the prowess of political and military adventurers were everywhere the rule. The student of Italian history during the Age of the Despots "recoils as from a chaos of inscrutable confusion." [7] Might was right and the successful ruler was he who

[4] Robinson, *Introduction to the History of Western Europe,* Chap. 12, p. 148.
[5] Duruy, *The History of the Middle Ages;* New York, 1891, Bk. 9, Chap. 30.
[6] *Ibid,* Bk. 9, Chap. 29, p. 450.
[7] Symonds, *Age of the Despots;* New York, 1883, Chap. 2, p. 32.

had no scruples in terrifying his subjects into obedience by whatever means lay in his power. "On reading the history of the Italy of those times we are astounded by the variety and the atrocity of the punishments. Was not this the very inferno that Dante (1265-1321) tried to describe in his Divine Comedy? He only needed to observe, not to imagine." [8]

But Italy, conscious of her pitiful condition, made repeated though futile efforts toward order. Henry VII. of the Holy Roman Empire, summoned by the Visconti and the Ghibeline faction to restore stability to the land (1310), was promptly excommunicated by Pope Clement V., and his progress was checked by the army of the King of Naples and the Guelfs. The next emperor, Lewis of Bavaria, failed similarly. John of Bohemia fared no better. The decay of the Kingdom of Naples—the last great power in Italy, which after the decline of the prestige of Emperor and Pope might have exercised real influence toward order—left the situation in an almost hopeless condition. The real power was in the hands of the condottieri—mercenary adventurerers who wandered about Italy letting themselves out to the highest bidder.

Within the Church there was hardly greater security. In both its temporal and spiritual aspects it was deeply shaken. The investiture strife between the popes and the holy Roman emperors, the struggle between Boniface and Philip the Fair of France, the exile of the popes at Avignon (Babylonian Captivity), the Great Schism with the rival popes, the struggle between popes and councils for supremacy—all these things had brought the ecclesiastical authority into disrepute. Even the establishment of conciliar authority as preëminent by the Council of Constance in 1415 did not solve the difficulty: in less than fifty years the childish conduct of succeeding councils had sufficed to discredit this authority completely. Moreover the preaching of Wycliffe and the Lollards and the teachings of Huss did much to undermine belief in the spiritual absoluteness which the Church had always claimed.

Throughout this chaotic period one can observe a general though half-conscious reaching out of human society toward some form of government by which the prevalent insecurity might be overcome, and a stable order established. In England and France the answer came in the form of a despotic centralized government; in Germany and Italy an adequate solution had evidently not been reached; in the Church the contest between popes and councils had served only to discredit the authority of each. But one thing is noticeable throughout: the demand, which was the expression of the general insecurity of the period, called invariably for a firm and vigorous

[8] Duruy, *The History of the Middle Ages*, Bk. 9, Chap. 29, p. 450.

authority—an authority founded on implicit obedience and enforced by the fear of punishment. The attempt of secular powers to centralize governments under a single head, the harsh decrees of Rome against the Albigensians and Waldensians, the Hussite wars, the establishment of the Inquisition, are instances of the answer to this demand by the appeal of ruling powers to the unquestioning obedience of their subjects from fear of the law.

Fear, writes Baldwin, in his definition of that type of fear on which authority may be based, is "the emotion arising from the expectation of what is disagreable." [9] "In fear, as in all painful feeling, conative tendency is at once excited and obstructed. But the conation must be of a special kind. It must be a tendency to practical adjustment more or less imperatively demanded by a practical emergency of a serious nature" [10] writes Stout. We can then define fear as the apprehension of future evil so conceived as to influence present conduct.

It is clear that this is the motive on which autocratic states are founded. If we transfer the motive to the field of ethics we are confronted with the view that only by the legal sanction of fear of punishment can morality be maintained—a view which refers us to some external law of God, nature, or society as final authority for right conduct.

So prevalent was this conception of the social motive force that we find it at the basis of the systems of three of the most notable political thinkers of the time—men of widely different powers and environment, but each, in large measure, characteristic of the temper of his age.

The Florentine historian, Machiavelli (1469-1527), in *The Prince,* writes as follows: "War is the sole art looked for in one who rules." [11] "It is contrary to reason to expect that the armed man should voluntarily submit to him who is unarmed." [12] "Men are less careful how they offend him who makes himself loved than him who makes himself feared.' [13] "There is no sure way of holding other than by destroying, and whoever becomes master of a city accustomed to live in freedom and does not destroy it, may reckon on being destroyed by it." [14] "Love is held by the tie of obligation, which, because men are a sorry breed, is broken on every whisper of private interest; but fear is bound by the apprehension of punish-

[9] Baldwin, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*; New York and London, 1901: Fear.
[10] Stout, *A Manual of Psychology;* London and New York, 1899. Bk. 3; Div. 1; Chap. 4; Sec. 6.
[11] Machiavelli, *The Prince;* Oxford, 1897, Chap. 14, p. 103.
[12] *Ibid,* Chap. 14, p. 104.
[13] *Ibid,* Chap. 17, p. 121.
[14] *Ibid,* Chap. 5, p. 29.

ment which never relaxes its grasp."[15] And finally, as though foreshadowing the theological position of John Calvin: "Matters should be so ordered that when men no longer believe of their own accord they may be compelled to believe by force."[16]

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1677) maintained that liberty is as impossible in politics as in metaphysics and ethics. Might makes right, and the natural state of man is the war of all against all. The State is a means of putting an end to this conflict by means of the passive and absolute obedience of the citizen. Whatever it commands is good, whatever it prohibits is bad. Its will is supreme law.[17] "For the Lawes of Nature (as *Justice, Equity, Modesty, Mercy,* and (in summe) *doing to others, as wee would be done to,*) of themselves, without the terrour of some Power, to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our naturall Passions, that carry us to Partiality, Pride, Revenge, and the like."[18]

The political philosophy of Spinoza (1632-1677) contains much the same emphasis as that of Hobbes. The basis of this emphasis in Spinoza's system is the natural rights of each individual which have been surrendered to the State for the common good. The supreme authority is itself bound by no law, while all are bound to obey it in everything it ordains, whether willingly or through fear. "Ruling powers have the right to command whatever they please, so long as they possess the power to enforce their commands, or are, in fact, the head of the State."[19]

Into such a society John Calvin was born (1509-1564). Possessed, we are told, of an autocratic and severe temperament, with less than average amount of the child's normal play activities, his one great moral idea was duty. The determining characteristic of a clear and relentless mind—logical symmetry—was reinforced and expanded by his scholastic education in the University of Paris, and by his legal training in the university of Orleans.[20] Temperamentally and by education he was fitted to be an exponent of the rigid and repressive social ideals of his time.

We have seen the great nations of Europe seeking an expression of power that would be both definitely authoritative and effective. We have seen this demand answered—in so far as it was answered—in both political theory and practice by the conception of an absolute sovereign from whose will there is no appeal. Let us

[15] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Oxford, 1897, Chap. 17, p. 121.
[16] *Ibid*, Chap. 6, p. 36.
[17] Hobbes, *Leviathan;* Cambridge, 1904, Chap. 17, 18.
[18] *Ibid*, Chap. 17, p. 115.
[19] Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico Politicus;* London, 1868, Chap. 16, p. 277.
[20] Walker, *John Ca* New York and London, 1906, Chaps. 2 and 3.
Prof. A. C. McGiffert, *History of Protestant Theology.* (Unpublished lectures.)

examine Calvin's conception of authority in religion with a view to determine whether or not it is in harmony with the spirit of his age, and whether it may therefore be regarded as a theological expression merely of that same great struggle toward order and stability.

"Foremost in Calvin's system was his emphasis on the great thought of God. His sovereignty extends over all persons and events from eternity to eternity. His will is the ground of all that exists. His glory is the object of all the created universe. His is the sole source of all good everywhere, and in obedience to Him alone is human society or individual action rightfully ordered. His honour is the first object of jealous maintenance by the magistrate or of regard by the citizen. Good laws are but the embodiment of His will; and complete surrender to Him is man's prime duty and only comfort. His kingly sovereignty, His glorious majesty, His all-perfect and all-controlling will are the highest objects of man's adoration, and the prime concern of all human interest. By His permission kings rule, and for each member of the human race He has an unalterable and supremely wise plan from all eternity. Infinitely transcending the world of created things in honour, dignity, and power, God touches it, and all human life, at every point with His righteous law and majestic sway." [21] "The will of God is the supreme rule of righteousness, so that everything which He wills must be held to be righteous by the mere fact of His willing it. Therefore, when it is asked why the Lord did so, we must answer, Because He pleased. But if you proceed farther to ask why He pleased, you ask for something greater and more sublime than the will of God, and nothing such can be found." [22] The analogy is striking. The national sovereigns, the Italian despots, Machiavelli's prince, Hobbes' ideal state—each or all might be the basis on which Calvin formed his idea of Deity.

Whatever the State commands is good, writes Hobbes; whatever it prohibits is bad. Its will is supreme law. [23] "Justly does Augustine complain that God is insulted whenever any higher reason than his will is demanded," writes Calvin. [24] Hobbes requires the passive and absolute obedience of the citizen. [25] "For how can the idea of God enter your mind without instantly giving rise to the thought, that since you are his workmanship, you are bound, by the very law of creation, to submit to his authority?" [26] writes Calvin.

Moreover a creature such as man is conceived to be could hardly

[21] Walker, *John Calvin,* Chap. 15, p. 409.
[22] Calvin, *Institutes,* Edinburgh, 1845, Bk. 3, Chap. 23, Sec. 2.
[23] Hobbes, *Leviathan;* Chap. 18.
[24] *Institutes,* Bk. 1, Chap. 14, Sec. 1.
[25] Hobbes, *Leviathan,* Chap. 18.
[26] *Institutes,* Bk. 1, Chap. 2, Sec. 3.

claim a higher destiny than passive obedience. "Men are a sorry breed," writes Machiavelli, incapable of being held by a tie of obligation, "which . . . is broken on every whisper of private interest." [27] "Original sin, then, may be defined," writes Calvin, "a hereditary corruption and depravity of our nature, extending to all parts of the soul, . . . the whole man, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, is so deluged, as it were, that no part remains exempt from sin, and, therefore, everything which proceeds from him is imputed as sin." [28]

This "sorry breed" of Machiavelli must be inspired by fear, "bound by the apprehension of punishment which never relaxes its grasp." [29] Such an ideal has its most astonishing fulfilment in the conception of hell furnished by Calvin for the eternal edification of the elect and punishment of the reprobate. "The pious mind . . . looks alone to the one true God . . . regarding him as a just judge, armed with severity to punish crimes, he keeps the judgment-seat always in his view. Standing in awe of it, he curbs himself, and fears to provoke his anger." [30] And the punishment which these pious souls endeavor to avoid, but which, not as a result of their sins, but rather on account of the arbitrary decree of God, [31] millions must endure, is described as follows: "To be consumed by death would be a light punishment were they not, in order to the punishment of their rebellion, to be cited before the Judge whom they have provoked to a vengeance without measure and without end." [32] "Moreover, as language cannot describe the severity of the divine vengeance on the reprobate, their pains and torments are figured to us by corporeal things, such as darkness, wailing and gnashing of teeth, unextinguishable fire, the ever-gnawing worm. . . . It is certain that by such modes of expression the Holy Spirit designed to impress all our senses with dread, as when it is said, 'Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it.' " [33]

Now this "terrour of some Power" destined to force the citizen to passive obedience, and the Christian to walk righteously and speak uprightly [34] is reinforced in Calvinism by several aspects both of man and of Deity necessarily foreign to the political systems instanced. The contrast between the strength and power of the

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[27] Machiavelli, *The Prince;* Chap. 17, p. 121.
[28] *Institutes,* Bk. 2, Chap. 1, Secs. 8 and 9.
[29] Machiavelli, *The Prince;* Chap. 17. p. 121.
[30] *Institutes,* Bk. 1, Chap. 2, Sec. 3.
[31] *Ibid,* Bk. 3, Chap. 21, Sec. 1. Calvin is not always consistent on this point.
[32] *Ibid,* Bk. 3, Chap. 25, Sec. 9.
[33] *Ibid,* Bk. 3, Chap. 25, Sec. 12; cf. Is. Chap. 30, verse 33.
[34] *Ibid,* Bk. 3, Chap. 12, Sec. 1.

ruler and the weakness and incapacity of the subject can never be so great in a political system where the power is either usurped by or vested in a man, as in a religious system, the apex of which is the maker of heaven and earth. "When we see those" (holy men) "who previously stood firm and secure so quaking with terror, that the fear of death takes hold of them, nay, they are, in a manner, swallowed up and annihilated, the inference to be drawn is, that men are never duly touched and impressed with a conviction of their insignificance, until they have contrasted themselves with the majesty of God." [35]

Further, God's ways are inscrutable—in the case of his decree of election and reprobation seemingly unjust. But man's reason is so perverted by the fall that he is as incapable of just judgment as he is of self-help. Man is not only depraved and ignorant but endangered by his human curiosity about spiritual matters. "For it is not right that man should with impunity pry into things which the Lord has been pleased to conceal within himself, and scan that sublime eternal wisdom which it is his pleasure that we should not apprehend but adore." [36]

Moreover, there is much in the character of God himself to inspire fear. Not only is his justice inscrutable, his fore-knowledge and control of the future actions of men paralysing, but his personality is believed to contain elements of nobleness and splendor calculated to produce terror in the abject beholder. "Let us," urges Calvin, "contemplate that Judge, not as our own unaided intellect conceives of him, but as he is pourtrayed to us in Scripture, . . . with a brightness which obscures the stars, a strength which melts the mountains, an anger which shakes the earth, a wisdom which takes the wise in their own craftiness, a purity before which all things become impure, a righteousness to which not even angels are equal," . . . and, most significant of all, "a vengeance which once kindled burns to the lowest hell." [37]

It is clear that between beings so disproportionate as God and man: one terrible in his indignant righteousness, seeking satisfaction rather than repentance, the other literally soaked in guilt; one creator and controller of the destinies of the universe, the other utterly weak and incapable; one gifted with all knowledge even of things to come, the other ignorant and imputing his ignorance a virtue—there could not exist any relation but one of authority on one side, obedience through fear on the other. Even the sense of God's incomparable majesty, manifested throughout the writings of Calvin, serves but to reinforce this fear on a higher basis. Imper-

[35] *Institutes*, Bk. 1, Chap. 1, Sec. 3.
[36] *Ibid*, Bk. 3, Chap. 21, Sec. 1.
[37] *Ibid*, Bk. 3, Chap. 12, Sec. 1.

sonal awe is but a differentiation of fear. "The latest and culminating differentiation of fear is awe, and the highest, most refined development of awe is in the feeling for the sublime." [38]

Finally, if we attempt to concentrate the meaning of the preceding pages into a few words, we must say that the ideals of Calvin's theology are in complete harmony with the spirit of his time: his conception of God is of an autocratic and irresponsible monarch, resembling rather the despots of Italy than the saner sovereigns of England and France; his conception of the utter depravity of man is the necessary basis and justification of autocratic government; and his conception of the moral ratification by which the decrees of the monarch are made valid for his subjects is the external, legal sanction of fear of punishment. Consequently we are forced to give to Calvin's work a local and historical, rather than an absolute value, to regard him as an exponent of the social mind of his time, rather than as a reformer in religious thought.

LOUISE EDGAR PETERS.

Thou seekest me? I am that which seeks.

Thou lovest me? I am that love.

To aspire is—to be.

So near I am that still thou seest not. But turn utterly thy heart, and all the rest is done.

Long for that which thou seekest. Do not be afraid to long.

—The Book of Echoes.

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[38] Stanley, *Studies in the Evolutionary Psychology of Feeling*, London and New York, 1895, Chap. 8, p. 119.

MEDITATION.

"BRAHMA thought of himself as the father of the world," according to the Vishnu Purana. This, says *The Secret Doctrine* (vol II, p. 59), is Kriya-shakti, the mysterious Yoga power; and Madame Blavatsky adds in a foot-note: "This *thinking of oneself* as this, that, or the other, is the chief factor in the production of every kind of psychic or even physical phenomena."

In meditation, then, we should think of ourselves "as this, that, or the other." But as what? Ultimately, as the Supreme Self, the One. We cannot, however, jump to this innermost realization from the level of our work-a-day consciousness. We are obliged by the nature of things—and it is best to follow nature knowingly—to work from particulars to universals, from the many to the one, from circumference to centre, from images to abstraction, from the contemplation of great souls, to the realization of ourselves as the one Self. And there are intermediate stages.

"God is Love": that is to say, Love, in the purest and most universal sense, although a finite conception of the Infinite, is as near as we can at present come to an attribute of That which is beyond all attributes. And without love developed to the uttermost, Unity can never be attained. We must feel love boundlessly before we can enter its source. But what shall we love? And how enlarge our love?

It is God, the Supreme Self, that we must love. But this is the centre, and we must begin at the circumference; in other words, with God made manifest in the world around us. We can work from love of beautiful people and things to love of all people and all things because all have something of beauty in them; and we can work from love of the beautiful to love of what is divine. Love of Masters of Wisdom, such as Buddha and Jesus, will help us at last to the love of that one Master in the hearts of all men.

But to love is very difficult. We must feed our minds with reasons for loving, and self-sacrifice on our behalf is reason enough, once we understand what such sacrifice implies. Christians have loved Jesus with an immense and wonderful love because they believed that he died for them. We, as Theosophists, have heard of a greater sacrifice than that: the sacrifice of attainment, of the perfect peace, in order to live and to work for humanity. And if even this leaves us cold, we know that we ought to feel grateful and

should therefore *think of ourselves* as being grateful and as loving those who have done and are doing so much for our sakes.

This will, in turn, help us towards the centre, towards love of the divinity within ourselves, if we will keep in mind the theosophical teaching that the spiritual soul of man voluntarily "descended into matter," or came into conscious touch with material existence, in order to raise the material and animal to Its own state of purity: a perpetual self-crucifixion—a god-like being, the daily and hourly witness of our selfishness and folly and vice, and, worst of all, of our indifference. Again, if even the thought of this leaves us cold, let us *think of ourselves* as being grateful and as actively, devotedly loving that which never turns aside in disgust, never despairs, but persists in its self-imposed task, for our sakes, for as long as time endures.

Gradually we may work towards the centre, from adoration to self-realization. Theoretically, at least, we know that the only reality in us is this same spiritual being who tries eternally to inspire: we may then *think of ourselves* as that which in fact we are—having the same heart, the same will, and the same aspirations. Further, and at last, this spiritual being is not in the truest sense "a being," but Being, the one Self: so, when we have overcome our sins and are otherwise fitted for the great adventure, we may *think of ourselves* as That.

But whether we think of ourselves as loving or whether we think of ourselves as that which is Love—from first to last let our prayer be, Not as I will, but as thou wilt, O my Father: for in this lies the surrender and the victory.

Also let us remember, so as at no time to be discouraged, that although meditation is the most powerful of all means to spiritual progress, it does not follow that we shall be able to observe results. Trying "to get ideas" is a hindrance rather than an aid. What we do get is spiritual Will, and that Will, often unperceived by us, affects our thought and conduct later.

R. P.

THE RELIGION OF THE WILL.*

THE WILL IN THE SPIRIT.

III. Immortality.

WE come now to the point where we have to sum up our conclusions concerning the Will and its part in life. We have considered the Will in the body, in the soul and in the spirit. Let us now look to the practical application.

The Will in the body we view as the general driving power of organic life; a force quite inexplicable by intellectual argument, but easily to be realized by exerting it, even in some quite simple act. In action, we find, indeed, that the Will is the primary force, while intellectual analysis, the reasoned explanation, is always secondary, later in date; a reflection, as it were, of the act, which has already had its life. So we draw this conclusion: that the Will is primary, a more fundamental part of us than is the arguing mind, and a force going deeper and higher.

The general driving power of organic life we found to be of the same nature as our conscious exertion of our wills, in any simple act, such as picking up a book. Such picking up, indeed, is the characteristic act of the search for food, which constitutes by far the greater part of bodily activity, whether we consider the life of any individual animal, or the general energies of life, through a wide range of living creatures. Therefore the stirring, vigorous movement of animal life implied by the search for food is normal and natural. The Will should be actively engaged in this direction, keeping the powers of observation alert, and all the bodily powers vigorous and in good working order. The whole of animal life teaches that the embodied man should be astir, exerting vigorous powers, perpetually bringing his will into play, in relation with the forces of nature in the material world; and that through this ceaseless interplay of the will and the forces without it, an immense and richly varied education and development are gained. So far as the moral issue is concerned, we see, therefore, that a life of ease, of sheltered inaction, of slackened will, must mean degeneration, loss of power, the end of development. Increasingly active effort and exertion of will is the lesson taught by the whole range of natural life among living things of this our various world.

We saw, again, that, whether they are conscious of it or not, the lives of the individuals of any species are closely related through

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this driving power of Will. The wills of neighboring individuals come into competition, as to their force, their exertion, the degree of alertness which accompanies them. A steady lifting, a raising of capacity and increase of power result from this mutual pressure. The Will, the driving power in animal life, works generally, and in a broad and sweeping way, so that a whole species is driven forward by a single comprehensive power. Under this driving power, as we saw, any species will tend to cover the face of the whole earth; bears lurk in the tropic woods of the Malay peninsula, and crack the bones of seals on the ice of the arctic sea; Scandinavian plants have found their way, we are told, across the north Atlantic, or over Asia, to the dorsal ridge of America; thence from Patagonia to the Antarctic continent, and thence to New Zealand. So that we may say that any form of life, whether plant or animal, would shortly fill the whole world, if free to move forward. This expanding, all-embracing energy, this comprehensive driving power, is inherent in every form of life. It is of the essence of life itself, the expression of the Will, in relation to all material forms.

To this universal extension in space corresponds, as we saw, an equally universal extension in time, or rather a driving power making for such extension, in the instinct and impulse of race-perpetuation. This we traced from its earliest form, the division of single-cell organisms into two or more exactly similar beings, each complete in itself, so that we cannot say that either is parent or offspring. The same process goes on indefinitely, so that, in a certain sense, any one-cell being is the original moneron, dating from the dawn of time, immortal backwards, and immortal forwards, so far as its inherent forces are concerned.

Greater richness and variety of form brought necessary death in its train, whose detriment was immediately repaired by the birth of new forms, continuity in time being thus secured by a new and wonderful expedient. The qualities and powers of life were gradually distributed between individuals of two sexes, thus securing a new and rich interplay of the energies of the Will in many directions of mutual helpfulness, the whole field of struggle for the life of others.

The Will in animal life acts, therefore, in such a way as to embrace the whole world, and to extend continuously through time.

Then coming to the realm of the soul, and using soul in the sense in which Saint Paul uses it, as the mid-realm of life between body and spirit, we traced the further energies of the Will. As we know of the world of the soul only in human beings, that is, in our own consciousness and the consciousness of our fellowmen and women, and can only divine the soul-life of animals less closely our kin, we then turned our inquiries toward the mental and emotional life which we find within ourselves.

Here, we found the Will to be wonderfully active, in quite new, yet analogous ways. When we come to human life, we are in presence of a great initial contrast with the animal world. In the animal world, development, whether of individual or of species or of the whole majestic series of living forms, is gained through the pressure of forces, taking the form of outward circumstance, of the general condition of nature, of the ways and tendencies of things. One may even say that this outer pressure is in a certain sense hostile to any given form or race of animals, that it is continually lying in wait to devour the unwary. This, it is true, is a possibly misleading metaphor, as it may be construed into an assertion of real hostility between nature and the forms that nature has produced, between the all-mother and her children. But while there is real pressure, there is no real hostility. Just as it is the even pressure, ceaselessly exerted on all sides, which enables the boat to float on the water, and, under the driving force of the oars, to move evenly forward, so the steady pressure of outer circumstance enables any living form to float upon an even keel, so to speak, and to move forward through the sea of things toward perfection. And just as the sea, though surging up against the cliff in waves, and then receding again, yet does steadily rise with the rising tide, so is it with life. There is a steady pressure and a steady gain. The manifold bubbles and ripples on the surface, which form only to break, and break only to form again, are like the creatures born only to die, and dying only to be replaced by new-born forms. But the sea of life remains, and as the tide rises, so does the level of life steadily rise.

There is, however, through the natural realm of life, a constant action and reaction, almost an opposition, between the living forms and the nature which surrounds them, just as there is an opposition between the waves and the cliff. It is true that, from a larger view, cliff and waves take their places together, as forms of world-life, and so too the living creatures and the forces which ceaselessly bear on them, take their places side by side in the total evolutionary life. But for the animals themselves, which are carrying on the struggle, this unity is not visible, or even knowable.

When we come to human life, as we said, we find a great contrast, or at least a great advance. Here, the struggle is no longer between each creature and the vast and seemingly hostile realm of outer nature, from which that creature is seeking to wrest a living. In human life, the struggle, whether of hatred or love, of opposition or unison, is between human souls, self-conscious human beings, invisible to the bodily eyes, because hid within animal forms, but clearly visible to the eyes of the intuition and the heart, clearly felt by the ever-active human will. And it is the charm and delight, the tragedy and the miracle of human life, that the forces are now in part put

into our own hands, to make or to mar; the powers which carry on the large process of development, through race after race, epoch after epoch, are entrusted to human wills, and lie within the field of human consciousness, visible and knowable, at least in part. It is not in man that walketh, perhaps, to direct his own steps; but it is in man to take those steps or to forbear. He may choose his pathway through pleasant pastures, or up lonely mountain-heights, or along the shore of the much sounding sea. He may love or hate, prove faithful or perfidious, loyal or base, he may slay or heal, he may do good or evil to his fellows, he may seek vengeance on his enemies, or pour blessings on tender hearts who trust in him; and at each step, in each act, he has the assured and real consciousness of a free act of will, as definitely free as mine, when I lift my book from the table, or leave it there.

We have had few artists or poets or historians who could rise to the greatness of the theme of human life, and show how men and women weave the warp and woof of destiny. Yet all have in some sort shown it, and all have in some sort furthered the great work of human life itself: the bringing of human souls into contact with each other, so that, whether by the sovereign attraction of love, or the dire clash of hatred, they may learn more of each others' being, gain some deeper insight into each others' consciousness and life.

In human life, the forces are in our own hands, to make or to mar, but only in part. The Power which watches over us keeps out of our reach the great sane, corrective forces which overrule our self-will and whim, and guide the total current into the true channels. Yet it is no longer true, as it was in the animal world, that these forces are invisible and unknowable to us. We can and do guess at them, consciously thwart or further them, divine their wider purport, and express our conclusion in the deeper and more enduring purposes of our lives.

Yet there remains much, and perhaps the greater part, in human life, which is not comprehended, not even divined; there are pains and sorrows and griefs which we must meet in lamentable bewilderment, or in dumb perplexity. The complaining millions of men who darken in labor and pain know little, and divine little of the great song of life. Nor, when we look back over the ages of human struggle and endeavor, can we see any broad and certain path of life; only a glint and a gleam here and there in the darkness. A prophet or a saint arises from the darkened throng, with tender heart and gleaming eyes, and speaks of man's divinity; but soon he sinks again, often torn down by those he would befriend and illumine, and the great throng struggles onward in the darkness.

Thus the realm of the soul, as we have used the word, is a realm of blended light and darkness, of fitful gleams, of half-lights,

shining forth to vanish again; of fierce joys and sorrows, of balanced hopes and fears, of good and evil in perpetual strife. Yet in human life, with all its imperfections on its head, we can discern golden threads of certain good. Out of the ruck of strife and struggle and sorrow, of ambition and rapacity and hate, no less than love and tenderness and service, there arises a constantly growing mutual knowledge, an ever increasing insight into the soul of man, a blending of consciousness and will, a greater degree of power and freedom, a deeper, wider and truer realization of the divine law in human life. We are all sharers in this expanding consciousness, whatever our private lives or purposes may be. And each epoch is something in advance of earlier epochs in this supreme matter of wider consciousness, of deeper entry into the souls of others.

Ever wider and deeper goes the reach of our consciousness, embracing more people, of more widely differing kinds. An alien is no longer a necessary enemy or a gazing-stock. There is more solidarity, because more common consciousness, between the unnumbered races of man. So we find in human life, what we found in animal life, the great driving power of the Will making for ever wider extension in space, ever further reach in time; shaping towards a human consciousness which shall embrace all mankind, and which shall be endless, timeless, everlasting.

When we come to the Will in the spirit, we find a new and marvelous advance. But let us first pick up the threads, the clues which have already led us a certain distance in that high realm.

In the spiritual life of man, as we defined it, we found the driving power of the Will manifest in certain ways. And, what was distinctive of this new realm, we found that now at last the Will makes manifest a complete purpose within the limits of each individual spirit of man. For the single animal, no complete purpose is apparent. Each must play its blind part in the darkness, born to struggle and die, that it may hand on an infinitesimal legacy to the great progress of living things. Even in the next realm, that of human life and of the soul, no completeness is visible. Every life is a fragment, lit by the glimmer of half-lights, echoing to mingled sobs and cries of joy, wrapt about with perplexity and confusion, tinged, on the whole, rather with tragedy than with hope; and hope, not realization or knowledge, being the highest word yet attainable.

In the realm of the spirit, we first reach a completed whole, or a whole whose completeness may be divined and followed out. This we saw in the first spiritual realm, that of wisdom. The Will, driving the spirit of man toward wisdom, does propose to him a complete purpose and goal; an aim, the more complete and not the less, because it is an infinite one, for only the infinite can be complete. The goal of wisdom, toward which the Will drives the

spirit of man, is a consciousness of the world, of the wide universe of God; a consciousness which shall be all-embracing, reaching even to the hidden planets of the utmost stars; plunging into atomic depths, soaring to the heights that archangels look up to; a consciousness that shall include all things, and shall include them as they really are, seeing the universe not as the bodily eye sees it, but as it unfolds itself, with all its natural and spiritual glories, to the boundless vision of God.

That is the true end of wisdom. And every seeker for wisdom, whatever may be the views which he consciously and avowedly holds as to life or man or the soul, does unconsciously or consciously hold this high faith, that the power within him can indeed know the truth of things and see them as they really are, as they lie spread out in the consciousness of God. This is, whether consciously or implicitly, the driving power of all search for knowledge, the revelation of the Will to the spirit of man.

So with the greater mystery of love. Its ultimate aim is not less all-embracing, and in its miraculous being, love goes far deeper than wisdom. For, while wisdom seeks to know all things, love seeks to be all things; for it is the essence of love, to enter into the inmost heart and being of the beloved; through love only can all be perfected in one.

Both wisdom and love are under the driving power of the Will. They are sought and unfolded under an impulse which we find already there, when we go into the depths of our hearts, searching for the uttermost mysteries. We find the impulse to know, the impulse to love, already there before us, not of our planting, and yet of the essence of our very selves, more ourselves than anything else we know of ourselves.

And here we gain a clue to the last high mystery. In those same deep and hidden recesses of our hearts where love and wisdom dwell, where dwell the high impulses of the Will which drive us to know as God knows, to love as God loves, there is awaiting us a fuller revelation of the Will; and, as we seek, so shall we find. And here we come on the ultimate mystery, the solution of the dark and bewildering problems of animal and human life.

In animal life, the Will of each form touched a great web of outer forces, seemingly hostile, even when they made for development, as hunger and death seem hostile. In human life, there is a vaster web of forces, vaster because more inward, in a world that goes deeper, and is not limited to surface development; and here again the Will of the individual touches a web of forces, half in the light, half in the darkness, half hostile, half kind, with much of joy in them, much of tragedy, even more of perplexity.

But in the realm of the spirit, as we learn to enter it, we find

a marvelous thing: the web of forces touched by the spirit of man is neither hostile nor alien, neither fitfully gleaming nor full of bewilderment. Opposition is no longer present, nor any barrier to our consciousness. To our wonder, we find the great powers which make for the highest development revealing themselves as powers within our own wills, within our own consciousness; as, in the highest sense, of the essence of ourselves, of our highest and most real selves.

The will to know, and to know all things, in the last analysis, as God knows them, I find within myself, not as an alien or hostile pressure, but as a part of my most real self; and, as I follow it, and, under its benign impulse and pressure, widen and deepen my consciousness, I am conscious of finding an ever deeper and more real self. In virtue of this perpetually increasing reward, the search for wisdom is among the deepest and most lasting joys of human life, and has ever called to the best in the best spirits.

So also of the impulse of love. The lover knows, it is true, "the love that makes him twice a man;" in finding the beloved, he has found himself. He will further know, when his consciousness deepens and ripens, that purer and stronger love which is not entangled with the impulse of race perpetuation, but which moves immediately between soul and soul. As he loves, as he puts himself aside in the constant sacrifices which all true love demands, he will learn that, in thus giving up his life, he first truly finds it, saving it unto life eternal. Love is not only or chiefly a thing of the perceiving consciousness, quiescent and placidly reflecting; it is even more a thing of the Will, conquering the impulses of self, and ministering with healing wings to the need of other souls. And this ceaseless exertion of the Will, at once sacrificial and creative, leads and initiates us into an increasingly deeper and more real knowledge of ourselves; as we sacrifice ourselves, we become ourselves; and, as we love others, we, in a certain sense, become them also, adding their consciousness and being to our own.

Nor is there any conceivable limit to this initiation into love. Every soul calls to us for love, as every child calls to the heart of a mother. Our future treasure is boundless and illimitable. And that treasure shall reveal itself as a new and marvelous opening of consciousness and will, which take on an ever more divine coloring and power.

So we find in the innermost recesses of the heart the new powers which, revealing themselves in human life, are destined to lead us forward to divine life. And they lead us by deepening, widening and transmuting our consciousness and will, cleansing the stains, unbending the hard knots of selfishness and self-will, illumining the bewilderment and doubt and materialism which have blackened

human life; and, greatest marvel of all, with each heightening and deepening of consciousness and will, bringing us to realize that we have found a life which is far more truly ourselves; making us, as it were, for the first time known to ourselves, in this high illumination and inspiration.

Surely the greatest secret of all begins to gleam out to us from these luminous indications. If, with each broadening and deepening of will and consciousness, with each truer entrance into the spiritual power and knowledge that move the worlds, we find a truer and more real self, must it not be true, as the last and final secret, that the Power of all powers, which is at the heart of all, the Will of all wills that moved small things and great alike, the Consciousness which lies within and about all consciousness, the Love which inspires every impulse of love, is, at the center of all Being, verily our inmost, hidden and most real Life.

It is we ourselves, in that high and divine sense, who have wrought out the fabric of the worlds, making ever for higher and wider perfection. Ours was the Will that set the monera spinning through that first ocean; ours the Will that imposed fretful hunger and inevitable death upon animal forms, since through these alone they work upward, in time growing ready to build a tenement for the soul. Ours was the driving power which, interlocked among all human wills, worked out the epics and tragedies of life, in its half-darkness and half-glow, its miracles alternately gleaming forth and hidden, its splendid hopes, its chill fears and doubts that brought darkness to the heart. Ours is the Will which, speaking in the inmost recesses of the heart, prompts us to infinite wisdom, infinite love, leading us into a consciousness which shall be as the consciousness of God, nay, leading us into God's inmost being.

We are far, as yet, in these early days, from having made good our high hope and calling; but the Will is there, the divine Will within our hearts; waiting to be heard and obeyed, as, in days of old, we obeyed the imperious call of hunger, the imperative command of our animal life; waiting to be obeyed as, at a later time, we obeyed the winsome and marvellous demands of human life. Let us, then, take up this new work, with serene, high faith; once more setting our wills in that high Will within our hearts, let us go forward with courage, making our entrance into new worlds.

Even in human life on its outermost surface we found in the Will a wonderful building power, so that mankind, using that power, has built on the surface of mother earth a new nature, a vestment of plants and living creatures formerly unknown to the great mother, and rather our children than hers. That same building power accompanied the Will even in the pristine ages of the world; the myriad

forms of creatures are the evidence of it. But only in man do we find it obedient to conscious thought.

The same building power has worked in human life, in its deeper and more invisible realms, whether we think of the bonds of relationship which hold together groups of human beings in those societies, and by those laws, which are in essence invisible, and have their home in thought and Will, though their outward appearance and symbolic vestures are visible to our eyes; or whether we think of the finer webs of being, embodying purer and more subtile thought, which we call poetry and art, history and science. Here, too, the Will is ever a builder. Again, in the realm of emotional and psychical life, we found each motion of the Will accompanied by instant building, in the finer matter of psychical and mental life. So incessant and inevitable is this building power of the Will, that our inner psychical selves are at once the builders and the dwellings; by thought, they build themselves homes of thoughts, and these homes become themselves.

So, we may believe, will it be with the grander and more majestic realm of the Will, which now beckons us to enter. There, too, shall we build, making for ourselves a more lasting dwelling. Even now, even in outward things, we inevitably foreshadow that high habitation, that vesture that grows not old. We may not think of railroads and steamships as spiritual things, yet they are living parables of the soul, for they are the means of bringing together human beings, and so widening the consciousness of each toward the consciousness of all. So also our telegrams and newspapers tend to bring all mankind into consciousness of the same things, and therefore into the same consciousness, day by day; thus working, blindly it is true, yet infallibly, for the high apotheosis of man. When we build our houses and warm them, are we not trying to make permanent a fragment of summer; when we light them, are we not seeking to conserve something of the day even by night; impelled thereto by the soul, which secretly knows of everlasting summer, of perpetual day? Are not these houses of ours but symbols and prophecies of the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, the unfading abode of the Soul itself?

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

THE END.

WHY I BECAME A THEOSOPHIST.

TO *become* a Theosophist certainly means much more than to become a member of the Theosophical Society, far more than the merely intellectual acceptance of the philosophy promulgated by some of its members; and the more carefully one studies the full meaning of the term the more he prefers to think of himself as a *student* of Theosophy rather than a Theosophist. With this discount of the editor's caption, the reader may find in the following a common enough story—one not different in essentials from the experience of every member who has found in the "Wisdom Religion" an eternally firm basis and an illimitable field for the faith that is in him.

Reared in liberal religious associations, I never "experienced religion" in the theological sense of the term, and never formally joined any church. As a child I had, of course, attended Sunday-school with fair regularity, although, owing to frequent migrations, not continuously in any one denomination; but of this earlier teaching my later impressions remained as somewhat hazy recollections of a few wonderful legends principally from the Old Testament, which I absorbed with much the same feeling as I did the narratives from the Arabian Nights and other wonder tales.

However, when about seventeen or eighteen years of age, I became an enthusiastic member of a Bible class in a Presbyterian church. It must be confessed that my interest was social rather than religious—all the boys of "our crowd" belonged. There were about twenty of us, and when the new church edifice was built we fitted and furnished our own exclusive class-room and I believe were somewhat self-impressed with our ecclesiastic importance. Our teacher, a maiden lady, was one of the sweetest souls I ever knew, one whose lovable character I am sure radiated a lasting influence for good in the lives of those about her. Yet it was in this Bible class that I received my first lessons in infidelity to orthodox theology.

"Aunt Jennie," as we all loved to call our teacher, was frequently obliged to be absent from the class meetings on account of ill health. On these occasions it was our custom to appoint one of our number as leader, and the study and discussion of the lesson often acquired a very critical quality and unorthodox range. One day, the lesson being from Genesis, the question was raised, from a geological standpoint, whether the earth could have been created in six days, as the text declared. Failing to settle the matter among ourselves, we finally referred the question to the minister. When we had

stated our case pro and con, the old gentleman hesitated a little and then replied somewhat as follows: "Well, boys, the word 'day' is correctly translated, but the word in the original may just as correctly be rendered 'period of time'; so what the text means is that God created the heavens and the earth in six periods of time. And then, you know, a day with the Lord is as a thousand years." So the problem was "explained."

But for me a greater one was raised: If the Bible did not mean what it said, why did the church teach its literal acceptation? If the theological interpretation was unreliable and misleading in one instance, might it not be equally so in other particulars, or even wholly false? Thus, as began to awaken within me the power to think, I tried by my fledgling faculty of reason to test the theology of the churches, and it seemed to me that at every point I found it wanting. Reduced to its last term, it was always "Believe or be damned." And I could not believe. Neither could I bring myself to feel that I should be damned if I did not believe—at least for unbelief in such conflicting theories.

Several years passed, during which time doubt of the reality of religion grew lustily until it had filled my mind and borne its fruit of bitterness toward all things called by the name of religion. Yet I was not naturally irreligious, and there was within me that which impelled me to seek a foundation whereon to build my personal philosophy. At this time materialism was quite the fashion, and I embraced it as offering ground which was evident. Circumstances then took me to a much larger city. There in the public library I found in plenty the literature of materialism, and for a time I reveled in it. But after a time, again doubt began to spring up out of the very dust of that so-called philosophy. The more I read, the more I began to suspect that its loudly proclaimed solid ground was but a dust-heap at best. After all, what was its foundation? A hypothesis utterly unprovable by its own dogmatic rules of evidence! Its boasted claims of "exact" knowledge I found to be often bewilderingly inexact, absurdly shallow and confessedly incomplete. It was a museum of fossils, all classified and labeled according to as many systems as there were "authorities"; but all the specimens were dead—mere dry, empty shells. Of what use was such material to build a philosophy of *life?* Where, amid such debris could I find enduring ground upon which to stand! I did not know.

Then I began to call myself an agnostic. Now, those of my readers who in their own lives have passed through stages of experience similar to my own up to this point, well know that agnosticism can be no permanent stopping place. The agnostic

must go either backward or forward; he cannot stand upon his position, for it is admittedly unstable. So for a year or two I tried to maintain my equilibrium, always, metaphorically speaking, with one or the other foot in the air. The posture was uncomfortable and wholly unsatisfying, and the only relief I found for my feelings was indiscriminate abuse of the religious beliefs of others. Especially were the hypocritical lives of several prominent professing Christians, with whom I had had disastrous business dealings, held up as examples of religion. After awhile, however, even this relief lost some of its flavor, for I was compelled to notice here and there about me men and women who seemed to be really practical Christians—and they were the ones who were making the least noise about it.

About this time I found in the public library H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, and I read it eagerly. Much of it was unintelligible to my ignorance, and some of it appeared to me wildly fanciful—and yet there was that in it which held me, which offered food to my hungry soul and which roused in me a strange sense of recovering what was my own. Indeed, as Pascal says, the heart has reasons that the reason does not know. Then followed *Esoteric Buddhism* and *The Secret Doctrine*. The latter was difficult reading for me, of course: but I could not let it alone. I also hunted out such other Theosophical books as I could find and read them, always with increasing interest if not full understanding.

Then there came to our city representatives of the Theosophical Society in New York, and a series of semi-public lectures was given. The result was the formation of a branch, of which I became a charter member. That was more than sixteen years ago. As a member of a branch my study of Theosophy gradually became more systematic; and when its scope and grandeur began to unfold to my understanding I felt as might a child who, for the first time in its life, has been led out of doors and breathes the free air and sunshine and glimpses the sublimity of a lawful universe.

Of course, all my difficulties were not at once solved, but I intuitively felt that Theosophy offered a clue to the great alkahest. My experience in the negative "philosophy" of agnosticism had driven me to the necessity of finding some positive truth upon which to rest my reason. Henceforth I determined to seek and take truth, so far as I was able to recognize it, regardless of the form in which it appeared, the source whence it came, or where it should lead me. If it made me a Buddhist, then I would be a Buddhist; if it led me into the Christian church, into the Christian church I would go; if it unfolded itself as atheism, I would be an atheist.

The realization that Law is not merely a name to be applied

to this or that isolated process or department of nature, but a universal and harmonious fact, was the first foundation-stone upon which I planted my feet. Then, I believe, I first gave real, serious consideration to the thought that man, the thinker, *is,* and tried to reconcile that fact with the *ex nihilo nihil fit* of "positive" science. This was not a new problem, but with true agnostic habit I had impatiently pushed it aside as unknowable. Now I faced it squarely. I had to. And Theosophy supplied the key to the solution satisfying to both intuition and reason. From this standpoint, reïncarnation presented no insuperable difficulties, but grew into its place in the broadening structure of my personal philosophy as a matter of course. So with the various other teachings put within my reach by the society; in so far as I was able to follow them I found them consistent and true—offering firm ground for the feet of reason and wings to the highest aspirations of the soul.

The study of Theosophy has not led me to join any church, but it has done what seems to me to be immeasurably more important —melted away my old intolerance of the mere forms which men have builded to express their conceptions of truth. Only through the pursuit of the second stated object of the society (particularly the study of the "heathen" religions of the East) has it become possible for me to understand, appreciate and respect the Christianity of the West.

The world-wide Theosophical Movement to-day is no longer merely a rousing voice outside of the churches, but a broadening and orienting power within them; it is no longer the supposed opponent of Western philosophy, for already Western philosophy is cautiously trying the ancient bases and quietly assuming advanced positions upon them; it is no longer the fancied foe of material science, for the material science of today has pushed its investigations to a point from which it begins to doubt its own materialism.

However lacking as a philosophic system the theology of the West may be when compared with the elaborate systems of the East, Christianity is nominally the religion of those about us, and only by sympathetic understanding can we hope to awake in them knowledge of the universal truths it holds in common with all science and philosophy. That understanding, I believe, can be gained only through the study of Theosophy. So that, aside from one's own satisfaction in knowing, the possibility of being able to help others to know should alone be sufficient reason for becoming a student of Theosophy.

A. I. M.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME.

Philanthropy.

THE *Screen,* it seems, should reflect occasionally the doings of Theosophists; and doings besides those included in "Activities." The leisure of a student should be at least as pregnant as hours of outer work—a thought not original to the writer, but borrowed from an address delivered recently by Professor H. B. Mitchell in the Chapel of Columbia University. Leisure should supply the inspiration for more and better action. In any case it often serves that purpose for certain members of the Society who meet casually, but with considerable regularity, in what need be described merely as an oasis—an oasis in a desert. Here they meet and talk and confer; and if adventures in the desert have been of humourous suggestion, that fact is not lost sight of. Differing in many other respects, they are agreed that humour is divine, although, like everything else in nature, it, too, has its seven or seventy times seven aspects, both high and low.

Not many days ago, when the writer joined them, he found his friends in the thick of a discussion as to the merit of some huge gifts of money to Universities and Libraries and Hospitals, of which the newspapers had been speaking. Were these gifts from the heart or from the head? Were they inspired by love and true compassion; by a subtle form of self-pity, or by an instinct of self-defence? The Centre of these occasions (there always is a Centre!) suggested finally that much of the philanthropic work being done at the present time is either mechanical or foolishly sentimental, and proceeded to explain sentimentality by means of an imaginary cat. Suppose, it was said, suppose you are asleep in bed, and a cat disturbs you with piteous and nerve-wracking cries. You are distressed and made uncomfortable. You cannot bear to think of the poor cat's pain. For the sake of your own peace of mind you bestir yourself and release the cat. What sort of a motive is that? Clearly selfish.

Would it then be better, someone asked, for the motive to be more like this. "Bother the cat—but it is my duty to go down and to do what I can for it?" Certainly, was the answer, that motive would be the better of the two; because at least it would show the beginnings of a sense of responsibility, and is not that the first sign of spiritual awakening?

This answer did not quite satisfy a third member of the party: surely, he said, Love should prompt the action, no matter what form

the action may take.—To which, in reply: Yes, Love should be the guiding motive; but love of what? Not love of self, and not love of cat merely as cat. There can be no true philanthropy without love of the Divine. No other motive is creative in the higher sense. The truly developed man would find in the cries of the cat an opportunity for service. He would welcome this opportunity as a gift from the Divine; as a means by which the Divine both in himself and in Nature could now be served. Consciously to act with that motive in mind, and, above all, in heart, would be the attitude of the disciple—"of the self-moving wheel."

Service.

"That, as it seems to me," broke in another, "is the supreme lesson: to take all things that happen, the pains, the drudgeries, the trials, as from God and for God; to learn to accept everything in that spirit; to perform all duties as in the service of the Supreme. The worst things that have happened to me," he continued, "I have found, later, were blessings in disguise. So that now it is almost easy to step forward rather than to retreat when trouble comes. Pleasures, too? Why, certainly. There can be no exception. Pleasure and pain are not inherent in occurrences; they are merely the colouring which we ourselves give to things that happen. But if all things were met as opportunities for service, with love of the Divine in our hearts, there would necessarily be less of personal sorrow, however much the growth of compassion might increase in us the capacity to suffer impersonally."

Self-Discipline.

All agreed to this; but someone suggested that even such positive and brave acceptance—truly a warrior virtue—might not be sufficient. Is it not necessary, at times, not only to accept what the Fates provide, but to take the aggressive, and to attack the lower nature by means of self-imposed discipline? Is there not much to be said in favour of the hair-shirt of mediæval monks? Should we not, instead of wearing an uncomfortable shirt, attack "the flesh" by some modern equivalent, for instance, by giving up tobacco, or tea and coffee, or "such other things as now make civilization tolerable—at times?"

To this the Centre replied: "Yes, I think the hair-shirt method has great value. If anyone were to assure me that he believed the wearing of one a help in his spiritual advancement, I should advise him to continue its use. Such practices or abstinences strengthen the will, and also keep the attention active. Yet, in the majority of cases, a faithful and concentrated performance of all the daily

duties would be discipline enough. Life provides the hair-shirts if we do not turn away from them!"

Discipleship.

"Concentration—if that only were understood," said the other. "But it is so often taken to mean the exclusion of foreign thought, instead of the calling up of all the powers of the heart and soul, with stillness at their centre, for the performance of the task in hand. Concentration of that sort upon our duties, and I imagine that the work both in ourselves and around us would well-nigh be done."

The Objector was growing restless. "Personally," he said, "I am rather afraid of so much attention to self-development. The best work I ever did, so far as I can judge, was at a time when I gave no thought to it, but was intent upon one thing only—upon discovering and carrying out the will of the Master in a certain emergency. This microscopic attention to faults and to needed virtues—well, sometimes I wonder if a greater indifference to one's own progress might not accomplish more."

This was provocative: perhaps purposely provocative; and if so it had the desired effect. It was the Centre who took up the challenge: "Granted that you were doing more effective and valuable work then than now—and of course I am in no position to judge of that—may it not be that if you had been able, at the time of which you speak, to combine a constant effort for self-improvement with the same strict attention to the work you had in hand, you would be in a better position to do what is needed today? Might you not now be a better instrument?"

W. Q. Judge as Authority.

Difficult to deny that possibility! But the Objector had not finished. "I remember," he said, "a man once going to Mr. Judge, and saying to him that he had ceased to have any desire to be a chela, and that he would not 'cross the road' to learn occult secrets: that all he wanted was to serve the cause of Theosophy. And to this Mr. Judge replied, 'That is all right. Go ahead.'"

"Doubtless Mr. Judge knew what he was doing when he answered your friend in that way, at that time. But to me he said —and surely to you and to the others also—that he would not so much as get onto a street car without thought of the One Self. It is not fair to take an isolated prescription, such as 'bread-pills,' and to infer from that a medical practitioner's estimate of the Pharmacopœia. . . . And your friend had of course misunderstood the A, B, C of chelaship, of discipleship. Most students did. Most students still do. What does it all mean if not an ability—and, to begin with, a desire—to bring heart and mind and will into union

with the heart, mind and will of the Divine? More specifically, into union with the will of the Master? What else was the teaching of Christ? 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' And again: 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'"

The Teaching of Buddha.

"What you say," commented another, "reminds me of a passage in one of the Buddhist *Suttas.* Exactly the same doctrine is expressed, though in different language"; and, reaching toward some well-lined shelves (the oasis containing these as well as other refreshment), he took down a volume of the *Sacred Books of the East.* "Here it is, in the *Tevigga Sutta,* in the third chapter. Vâsettha has asked the Buddha whether it is possible to attain to the Divine, to 'the world of Brahmâ'; and, if so, how this can be done. The Buddha tells him, in reply, that to live 'with mind set free, and deep-felt pity, sympathy, and equanimity,' is the first step in the path of union. Then he says:

"'Now what think you, Vâsettha, will the Bhikkhu (disciple) who lives thus be in possession of women and of wealth, or will he not?'

"'He will not, Gotama!'

"'Will he be full of anger, or free from anger?'

"'He will be free from anger, Gotama!'

"'Will his mind be full of malice, or free from malice?'

"'Free from malice, Gotama!'

"'Will his mind be sinful, or pure?'

"'It will be pure, Gotama!'

"'Will he have self-mastery, or will he not?'

"'Surely he will, Gotama!'

"'Then you say, Vâsettha, that the Bhikkhu is free from household cares, and that Brahmâ is free from household cares. Is there then agreement and likeness between the Bhikkhu and Brahmâ?'

"'There is, Gotama!'

"'Very good, Vâsettha. Then in sooth, Vâsettha, that the Bhikkhu who is free from household cares should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahmâ, who is the same—such a condition of things is every way possible!'

"'And so you say, Vâsettha, that the Bhikkhu is free from anger, and free from malice, pure in mind, and master of himself; and that Brahmâ is free from anger, and free from malice, pure in mind, and master of himself. Then in sooth, Vâsettha, that the Bhikkhu who is free from anger, free from malice, pure in mind, and master of himself should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united

with Brahmâ, who is the same—such a condition of things is every way possible!' "

Imitation.

"Clearly, the whole problem resolves itself into *the creation of likeness.* To begin with, a general understanding and broad conception would be requisite and perhaps sufficient, but, as in the case of an artist, there must be closest attention to detail before the likeness can be complete. And beyond any question, every *unlikeness* must be eliminated."

"You don't suggest, do you," asked the Objector, "that discipleship involves slavish imitation?"

"Is it 'slavish imitation' for a young painter to copy some masterpiece of the past? Surely he may, and in fact ought to do this in order to develop his own individual powers. Stevenson's style was instinct with his own personality. It was in every sense 'his own.' And yet, was it not Stevenson who developed his natural gifts by the most faithful and laborious imitation of the styles of great writers? Does he not say, in his *Memories and Portraits,* that as a young man, during his walks in the country, he would stop to write a description of some lane or hedge or hamlet, first in the style of one favorite author and then of another? 'That, like it or not, is the way to learn to write.' It was so Keats learned; and Shakespeare himself, the imperial, proceeds directly from a school. . . . But a direct answer to your question is given in Cavé's *Fragments:* 'Your instrument must not be like another's instrument—no need to duplicate these. It is your special kind which is needed, and wherein you differ from others is not where you fail, but where, if perfected, you may do your own special work which they cannot do.'

More About Chelaship.

"It is extraordinary," said the Centre, "how this misconception of chelaship persists. There was some excuse for it twenty years ago, but now, after so much has been said and written and done! There are people who turn deliberately from the very thought of it, because they regard it as some exotic growth, or imagine it would be 'presumptuous' for them to aspire so far. Simple gratitude to Masters, who have given us so much and whose love is so constant and profound, should be sufficient to inspire us with love for them; and love for them would give courage and understanding enough. Perhaps it is not realized that this steady stream of gifts to us has involved great sacrifice. To give without response is to impoverish; and every time that one of us has failed, from the foundation of the Society to the present day, some Master has been the sufferer. In the same way, to the extent that any one of us makes of himself a responsive instru-

ment, sympathetic 'to the wind of His Presence,' to that extent is the Master's power increased. We forget that every step forward which we make, is a gift to them—a gift to them of power and, in some sense, of rank."

"What would you suggest, then, as the most concise description of discipleship? What attitude of mind does it imply?"

"An attitude of Attention, Recollection, Detachment. Those three words, in my opinion, contain the whole secret, with Obedience as their connecting thread. Attention is necessary in order to be obedient; and so of Recollection and Detachment. But no such attitude will be possible without love as its inspiration. There must be the desire to 'bring gifts'—the gift of an ability to respond, to serve, to co-operate with the Master in His work."

Christian Discipleship.

"It would almost seem, from what you say, that an orthodox Christian might be more truly a chela than some student, even an old student, of the theosophical philosophy. Change 'the Masters' or 'the Master' to 'Christ,' and the most bigoted would accept your statements as their own."

"Why not? Have you forgotten *Light on the Path?* 'My peace I give unto you,' can only be said by the Master to the beloved disciples who are *as himself.* There are some even among those who are ignorant of the Eastern wisdom, to whom this can be said, and to whom it can daily be said with more completeness.'—And that was written nearly a quarter of a century ago. Do you suppose that Christ is dead? He did not intimate that merely because he ceased to exist as Jesus of Nazareth, he would lose interest in his followers. If the educated Theosophist, in spite of his intellectual advantages, lacks the love which discipleship requires, he should not be surprised if the devotion, the fervor and the *obedience* of some orthodox Christians carry them over barriers which his intellect cannot pass. If they are attentive to the Master's voice, in all the duties of their daily lives; if, faithfully and unfailingly, they recollect their highest ideal, and undertake all things in reference to it; if they remain detached, leaving the results of their actions in His hands; and if they carry with them the conviction that the world of motive and aspiration is more real than the physical world of effects—would you deny them their discipleship? Would you deny the Buddhist his? Or the Vedantin his? If, in spite of our intellectual advantages, we cannot even be impartial, it does not seem fair to expect of such advantages much more than the reward of self-complacence. And those who want that, can claim it!"

"The unkind critic might suggest that if orthodox Christianity be so productive of chelas, we, as Theosophists, should do every-

thing we can to strengthen that orthodoxy: this, as a sort of *reductio ad absurdum.*"

"In that case, the unkind critic would miss the point, as unkind critics usually do. I do not think I said that orthodox Christianity is productive of chelas—of disciples in the real and mystical sense, but that disciples are produced in the midst of orthodoxy. And it would be fair to infer, not that we should strengthen the orthodoxy, but that we should do everything in our power to encourage the understanding of, and effort for, discipleship—whenever and wherever we discover its possibility."

CONCLUSION.

"Could it not be said," remarked the Student, "that Theosophy and Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism, in each case present an opportunity, great or small; and that the outcome, in terms of discipleship, must depend entirely upon the use made of that opportunity?"

"I think that is well expressed. It would follow that the greater the opportunity, the greater should be the achievement. So that we, who call ourselves Theosophists and consider our opportunity the greatest of all, can make good our claim only by living more faithfully as disciples than those whose opportunity we deem more restricted than our own . . . Incidentally—how many members of the Society realize that to give way to some such fault as impatience, even in secret, is a blow at our public propaganda, and at the Cause they desire to serve?"

There was a pause. Then the Student, smiling: "I am reminded of another saying of the Buddha's: 'Wide open is the door of the Immortal to all who have ears to hear; let them send forth faith to meet it.'"

T.

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

(Motto of the Theosophical Society.)

"Surely the truth must be that whatsoever in our daily life is lawful and right for us to be engaged in, is in itself a part of our obedience to God; a part, that is, of our very religion. Whensoever we hear people complaining of obstructions and hindrances put by the duties of life in the way of devoting themselves to God we may be sure they are under some false view or other. They do not look upon their daily work as the task God has set them, and as obedience due to Him. We may go further and say not only that the duties of life, be they never so toilsome and distracting, are no obstructions to a life of any degree of inward holiness; but that they are even direct means, when rightly used, to promote our sanctification."—H. E. Manning.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLES

Theosophy and Mental Culture.

TO "Know Thyself" as far as possible is an important duty. A fuller knowledge of our intellectual nature will enable us to cultivate the different faculties in a more purposeful and profitable way. When the light of intellect shines on the path of conduct it helps us to purify and ennoble our character and to be helpful to our fellow men, and as no chance act can be a moral one this light is absolutely necessary—we must *know* in order to *do*. This knowledge of our mental constitution is not easy to attain because of the wonderful complexity of life. The old psychology combined simple sensations into perceptions, perceptions into conceptions, conceptions into judgments, and judgments into syllogisms, and thus built up the mental life. But we find that life is far richer and more complex than the old science taught and we can no longer follow the old way. Life seems full of contradictions, and its demands upon us often appear to be opposed to each other. In the physical world friction hinders motion, motion and rest seem opposed to each other, yet energy cannot be sustained without rest, and power comes through repose. What is true for the physical world is also true for the mental sphere. There is an inborn tendency to stay as we are, and another tendency just as strong to change. Professor James calls this a struggle between "genius and old-fogyism." He further says that our "education is a ceaseless compromise between the conservative and the progressive factors." There is a demand for us to live the simple life, to be thoughtful and meditative, and yet an equal demand that we live the strenuous life, deciding promptly on what to do and doing it with enthusiasm wasting no time in idle dreaming. When we turn to religion we find these same contradictory tendencies and demands. On the one hand there is a tendency to be superstitious, to believe in the magical and supernatural, and on the other hand a tendency to be materialistic, to believe only what the senses demonstrate—rationalism and mysticism are constantly urging their apparently contradictory claims. In the building of character we feel the impulse of self-surrender, yet just as strongly we feel urged to self-assertion. The

spirit of content and the desire to improve are ever in contention, and like Saint Paul we feel that we are two men, a higher and a lower, a physical and a spiritual, so that often "The good which I would I do not. but the evil which I would not that I practise" (*Romans* VII, 19).

Does Theosophy throw any light on this constitution and will it help us to understand and control these contradictions and make life a unit with an intelligent purpose? Will it give us any assistance in the control and cultivation of our mental faculties, and through that in the unfoldment and perfection of character? Let us see. It teaches that the real man is the thinker, and this thinker, Manas, is immortal but clothes itself over and over again in transient personalities. *The Voice of the Silence* says: "Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live forever, that which in thee knows, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life; it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike." The Wisdom Religion teaches that this immortal Ego has in past ages gained a vast amount of wisdom in other worlds of the universe, or under other material conditions and has now descended to this earth to incarnate in these human-animal bodies, in order to gain additional wisdom through association with the play of passions raging upon this plane of the Universe. At the same time it may give to these lower entities—human elementals—something of its own essence, so helping their evolution to the spiritual plane. Theosophy teaches that the lower nature of man was through long ages slowly evolved until he reached a point where the quaternary was complete and man was a fourfold being composed of body, etheric double, Prana, and Kama. This was the mindless man spoken of in Theosophical literature, an irrational, unreasoning animal. Kama or Desire rules him, and Kama represents all the passions and emotions of man's nature, showing itself in pride, lust, anger, envy, greed, and a host of similar manifestations. It is a Principle or state of consciousness common to the animal world, but this mindless man had progressed a little further than the animals below him, his brain and nervous system being far more perfect. He was therefore richer in instincts, for instinct is wisdom attained through stored up experiences of the elemental soul in past embodiments, just as intuition on the higher plane of consciousness in man is the result of stored up experience upon the mental plane of being.

We are told that about eighteen millions of years ago the Manasaputra (Sons of Mind) the immortal Egos mentioned above, who had gained vast knowledge and experience in other worlds, took up their abode in these mindless men. These Reincarnating Egos are

the Manas in us, the fifth Principle in man. By this association, or incarnation, a portion of the essence of the Higher Ego comes in contact with the animal brain and nervous system. As the blowing of wind into a dull fire makes it blaze up and burn brightly, or as a magnet in contact with non-magnetic iron seems to impart something of itself to the iron, turning it into a magnet, so this contact of Manas with the human-animal seems to bestow a portion of its own reasoning and thinking power upon it, and the brain which before was reasonless now blazes up and begins to look like a rational center of consciousness.

Manas, belonging to a higher plane of being, cannot come into direct contact with the brain, but projects a part of its own substance which clothes itself with Astral matter, and then with the help of etheric matter permeates the brain and nervous system of the human body. The ray of Manas thus projected is called the lower Manas, for Manas is dual during each incarnation. It is sometimes spoken of as clasping Kama with one hand, and holding on to its father (higher Manas) with the other. This personality is often called Kama-Manas, but this is not a new Principle, but the joining together of the fourth and fifth. The fourth Principle supplies the animal and passional elements, while lower Manas rationalizes these and adds the intellectual faculties. It is lower Manas that listens to the voices from both above and below, and which inclines now to one and then to the other. It very rarely becomes one with Kama, for the desires of Kama are distinctly recognized as coming from below, but the connection is very close, indeed, so close that it sometimes identifies itself with the lower, passionate nature and becomes really a partner with the lower nature. By adding the light of reason, memory, and anticipation to the delights of the sensuous nature, lower Manas greatly intensifies them and so makes its task of conquering them more and more difficult. Through this close companionship there grows up a strange, illusionary, unreal entity that has no real sense of the eternal, but speaks of existence as this short earthly life. And this transient entity is our ordinary everyday selves. But in proportion as lower Manas recognizes its spiritual father and reaches up towards him will be its power to separate itself from its lower partner, and so bring into subjection the passions and appetites and become indeed the vehicle of higher Wisdom. As lower Manas conquers Kama and becomes master of the lower nature it manifests more and more of its true nature. H. P. Blavatsky says: "Whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being from Kama it becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of free will in physical man." (*Lucifer,* October, 1890, page 94.) It has already been said that

lower Manas functions in the brain and nervous system and so gives the brain—mind—the mental faculties. If the molecular constitution of the brain be fine and the physical organs of digestion and assimilation be healthy and the blood pure, the expression of the soul will be clear and strong; but if the structure of the brain be of a low order, coarse, or deficient, or the blood impure, the body hurt by excesses, or bad living, the light of Manas will be dull and the soul unable to express itself. When the windows of a lantern are dirty the light does not shine out clearly, so if the instrument be poor the soul's expression is poor, and if Kama be very strong it will rule the brain instead of being ruled by it.

This is forcibly stated by H. P. Blavatsky in her article on "Genius." She says, "The flame of genius is lit by no anthropomorphic hand, save that of its own spirit. It is the very nature of the Spiritual Entity itself, of our *Ego,* which keeps on weaving new life-woofs into the web of reincarnation on the loom of time, from the beginnings to the ends of the great Life-Cycle. This it is that asserts itself stronger than in the average man through its personality; so that what we call the manifestations of genius in a person are only the more or less successful efforts of that Ego to assert itself on the outward plane of its objective form—the man of clay—in the matter-of-fact daily life of the latter. The Egos of a Newton, an Æschylus, or a Shakespeare, are the same essence and substance as the Egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool, or even an idiot; and the self-assertion of their informing genius depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. No Ego differs from another Ego, in it primordial or original essence and nature. That which makes a mortal a great man and another a vulgar, silly person is, as said, the quality and make-up of the physical shell or casing, and the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real inner man; and this aptness, or inaptness is, in its turn, the result of Karma. Or, to use another simile, physical man is the musical instrument, and the Ego the performing artist. The potentiality of perfect melody of sound is in the former—the instrument—and no skill of the latter can awaken a faultless harmony out of a broken or badly made instrument. This harmony depends on the fidelity of transmission, by word or act, to the objective plane, of the unspoken divine thought in the very depths of man's subjective or inner nature. Physical man may—to follow our simile—be a priceless Stradivarius, or a cheap and cracked fiddle, or again a mediocrity between the two, in the hands of the Paganini who ensouls them" (*Lucifer,* November, 1889).

She makes a distinction between the true and the artificial

genius, one being born of the light of the immortal Ego, the other from the will-o-the-wisp of the terrestrial or purely human intellect and the animal soul. She further says that this artificial genius is the "outcome of culture and of purely intellectual acuteness. It is not the direct light of the Manasaputra, the Sons of Wisdom, for true genius lit at the flame of our higher nature, or the Ego, cannot die." She further says that artificial genius, which is often confused with the true, is but the outcome of long studies and training. "Born out of the chaos of terrestrial sensations, of perceptive and retentive faculties, yet of finite memory, it will ever remain the slave of its body; and the body, owing to its unreliability and the natural tendency of matter to confusion, will not fail to lead even the greatest genius, so-called, back into its own primordial element, which is chaos again, or evil, on earth." The teaching is that every true genius is pure and good, "Behold in every manifestation of genius—*when combined with virtue*—in the warrior or the bard, the great painter, artist, statesman or man of science, who soars above the heads of the vulgar herd, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine Ego whose jailer thou art, Oh man of matter!" This is the truth, then, "that genius is not due to blind chance, nor to innate qualities through hereditary tendencies—though that which is known as atavism may often intensify these faculties—but to an accumulation of antecedent individual experiences of the Ego in its preceding life and lives. For though omniscient in its essence and nature, it still requires experience through its personalities of the things of earth, earthy, on the objective plane, in order to apply the fruition of that abstract omniscience to them. And, adds our philosophy—the cultivation of certain aptitudes throughout a long series of past incarnations must finally culminate in some one life, in a blooming forth as genius, in one or another direction."

In the light of this teaching some things become clear to us, and the first is that, if our efforts at Mental Culture are to be successful, we must be obedient to the physical laws of health and growth. A man may have a large brain whose convolutions are deep and complex; indeed, so far as the mental organs go, he may be a giant, but if the liver and spleen do their work imperfectly, so that the blood is impure and poisonous, and the circulation weak, the mental manifestations will be feeble and erratic. His first duty is to purify the body and restore the physical organs to healthy action. If the brain be of poor quality, or if it has not been trained, but allowed (so to speak) to run wild, the first duty will be one of curbing and guiding, by giving the brain certain tasks to perform at certain times. Discipline must first be attended to. To quicken and train any group of mental powers will have a beneficial effect

upon all the faculties and so make it easier to train any single one of them. Let us not forget that the training of the mind is not cramming it with facts, but the drawing out of its powers, and this will be largely accomplished by exercise. Mental exercise must be persistent and methodical. As it is impossible to develop our muscles thoroughly if we carelessly take an hour of exercise today, and then wait a week or a month before we repeat the exercise, so the development of the mental faculties depends upon exercise regularly and persistently taken.

Good books are a great help in many ways, but if we wish to read in order to strengthen and develop our thinking power we must not choose what is called easy reading, but get a book by a good author and one full of strong fresh thought. Neither must we read for speed, but read slowly, concentrate, think closely and intently over what we read. Of course at first, this will be exhausting, but this practice for half an hour a day will prove to be a great blessing, as by it one not only acquires new ideas but also strengthens the thinking faculties. Nature makes us pay for all we get, and mental culture can only be bought by hard work. The law of periodicity is of great importance, for we learn by experience that by taking up the same subject at the same time each day the mind seems to be ready for it, and the work becomes much easier, so that what at first was irksome becomes a delight. A second thing that becomes clear to us is that the work of mental culture is two-fold. While obedience to the physical laws that govern brain and body is necessary, and definite thinking is of the greatest importance in Mental Culture, there is another side. The physical brain is the vehicle used by the Thinker to express himself, for the source of all thought is the immortal Self, and we only draw out what we already possess. By exercise and training the brain becomes more fit to receive and manifest the thought and will of the real man. The power is there, and it should fill us with hope and courage to remember that the more perfect we can make the instrument the greater will be the power manifested. The daily meditation recommended by Theosophy lifts one out of the turmoil of life, gives serenity and self-control, and renders the brain sensitive to the touch of the real man. This means increased energy in mental work and shows us that the spiritual side of mental culture is as important as the physical. Let us in our efforts at Mental Culture not neglect the daily meditation, that the mind may receive from the spiritual planes a current of life and power.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.

The Problem of Human Life, As Viewed by the Great Thinkers from Plato to the Present Time, by Rudolf Eucken, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Jena; awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1908 (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909; price $3.00). This is an illuminating book. It is a splendid example of the theosophic method. The attitude of the author is well illustrated in a sentence from his Introduction: "One doctrine defies another only so long as the respective systems are regarded in the light of finished results and the intellect is called upon to be the sole and final arbiter of every question." Professor Eucken does not regard error simply as error. He sees in it a step, and a necessary step, toward the attainment of truth. His treatment of the past is based on "the conviction that human destinies are not decided by mere opinions and whims, either of individuals or of masses of individuals, but rather that they are ruled by spiritual necessities with a spiritual aim and purport, and that for man a new world dawns transcending the merely natural domain—the world, namely, of the spiritual life" (p. 566). He traces the evolution of man's apprehension of truth, from Hellenism to Christianity, and so on to the thought of the modern world, through Bruno, Montaigne, Bacon, to Descartes, Spinoza, Locke and Leibniz. All the great leaders are included: Hume, Rousseau, Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Schopenhauer, Comte, Mill and Spencer; then "The Reaction against Realism," and, finally, "The Present Situation." He insists that "the man of today is much more than he himself is conscious of being." In the very fact that the problems of our spiritual existence are being faced, he sees "a definite rejection of the shallow, self-satisfied negative criticism which measures its success by the extent of its robberies, and actually thinks it exalts man by systematically eliminating everything in him that calls for reverence." Times like ours though they be hard and uncomfortable, "hotbeds of dissent and denial," are stirring and fruitful, "insuring to man a unique dignity and vocation." "For they show that only through his own deed can he win to what is fundamental in his nature, that he himself is a co-worker in the building of the whole, that he is lord of his own destiny." We trust this book will be read widely, and that Professor Eucken will receive the recognition and respect in America, that Germany, and, in fact, educated Europe, has accorded him for many years past. Theosophists, in any case, should welcome this addition to their literature. T.

The Survival of Man, by Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S. (Moffat, Yard & Co., New York; price $2.00); and *Spiritistic Phenomena and Their Interpretation,* by Cesare Lombroso (Small, Maynard & Co., Boston; price $2.50). Both these books are valuable as the most recent contributions of the modern, scientific mind towards the solution of psychological problems. Is there survival of consciousness after the death of the body? Fundamentally, that is the question which both Sir Oliver Lodge and Professor Lombroso undertake to answer; and

both of them answer it affirmatively. They rely chiefly upon experiments with abnormal subjects. Neither of them seems to realize that the question can never be answered convincingly by any such means. What am I here and now? Am I body or am I soul? What are my powers and faculties? Are there other powers, latent within me, which I can develop, and the activity of which will outlast the life of the physical body? Until some of these questions have been answered to the satisfaction of the inquirer, no amount of experiment with hypnotic or mediumistic subjects will carry real conviction. Proof must come from within, not from without. Even those who, in the words of Lodge, "have conscientiously read this and the other records," are more likely than not to remain sceptical, unless they have satisfied themselves previously that the inner forces of mind and soul are active within themselves. Further, the demonstration of the survival of consciousness after death, even were that wholly possible, would not touch the problem of immortality. To use a phrase of Professor Eucken's, we must, if we would be convinced of immortality, be transplanted "from a present of mere immediacy into a present that transcends our time-experience." Impossible, for most of us, to live in that transcendence always; but a moment's glimpse of it will give knowledge which only long forgetfulness and indifference can remove—a moment of spiritual consciousness. Intellectually, however, these books are full of interest. For the student of Theosophy, Professor Lombroso's chapter on the "Double"—the doppelganger—has a peculiar significance. It confirms in every respect the ancient view of which Madame Blavatsky reminded us. For years beyond number the existence of the etheric double has been known, and its functions have been mastered by those who have preserved some knowledge of the doctrine of the mysteries. There are savage tribes today, many members of which, although without the spirituality which alone gives full enlightenment, have more real knowledge of the etheric body than years of scientific research could give. They can use it; can, to some extent, function in it. And the deeper understanding of that, and so many of the other phenomena which Lodge and Lombroso record, is still within the reach of one of them (death has removed the other). The ancient scriptures of the world, with the clues to their meaning which Madame Blavatsky provided, are as scientific as any modern text-book. Their study, like the study of treatises on chemistry or physics, will save the student much waste of effort and many dangerous and needless experiments; and they will put him on the track of discoveries which, otherwise, the life-time of one man would not be long enough to make. Sir Oliver Lodge is so great a man, so fearless, so open-minded, that it is always a matter for regret when his splendid powers seem to be used for purposes less splendid than himself, or to less advantage than is possible. He is a world-asset. We wish he would realize the importance of the second, as well as of the first and third objects of the Theosophical Society. T.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church, edited by C. G. Herbermann, Ph.D., LL.D., Condé B. Pallen, Ph.D., LL.D., John J. Wynne, S.J., and others (Robert Appleton Co. New York; in fifteen volumes, price $8.00 per volume). For many years to come this magnificent work will be the standard authority on the doctrine of the Church of Rome. Its contributors in every case are men of world-wide reputation. They have been selected from the greatest scholars of England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and America. Volume VI has just appeared. It begins with "Fathers" and concludes with "Gregory." To say that the quality of the earlier volumes is maintained, is sufficient praise. We wish that similar works could be issued by the Anglican, Greek, and Protestant churches. The comparison would be of intense interest. If, for

instance, the article on *Filioque,* by the Rector of Woodstock College, is the best that can be said in support of the Roman and Anglican view, it seems probable that the Greek authorities would have small trouble in demolishing it. The article on *Galileo* is instructive: it shows at once the wide scholarship and the almost inevitable limitations of the modern Catholic apologist. The maps and illustrations are superb. The only criticism we have to offer is that so little space is given to the legendary side of the lives of the Saints. Scholarship need not discard everything for which there is insufficient evidence historically. Some acquaintance with the Oriental scriptures would show that the less "presentable" legends are often the most instructive. The influence of St. Francis of Assisi over wild beasts which, otherwise, would seem incredible, may be classed with the achievements of many Eastern ascetics and so, while losing its supernatural character, may throw valuable light on the attainments of the Saint, and on the result, generally, of spiritual development. It is important, therefore, that such legends should be preserved; and a religious Encyclopedia is no unfit place for them. T.

A Stuffed Club, December, 1909 (Denver, Colo.). Dr. J. H. Tilden, the editor, who is also the principal contributor to this little monthly magazine, is possessed of such tremendous and exuberant vitality that sometimes he prejudices his case by explosiveness of statement. His club is stuffed with dynamite. Nevertheless, what he has to say is nearly always based upon sound theosophical principle and is invariably stimulating. We wish his views were accepted universally by the medical profession. As therapeutic measures, Dr. Tilden has more faith in "warmth, quiet and abstinence," than in all the drugs so far discovered. This is what he says about pain in his December issue: "It is well to remember and never lose sight of the great truth that pain, as well as all the symptoms we call disease, is our friend. This being true, pain should not be killed; it is unnatural to suppress, destroy or kill a friend. Like begets like; love begets love; kindness begets kindness. This is the foundation of all good, and the only true ethics. If pain is a friend, to suppress it is to strike a fatal blow at the heart of all ethical order. Affinity, attraction and cohesion are the primary elements out of which ethics is evolved. The warning that pain gives is one of the earliest ethical manifestations this side of the subconscious state. Pain when not understood is always interpreted as an enemy; with that understanding it is natural to resort to anything and everything that will relieve, suppress or destroy it. As ridiculous as it may appear to *Club* readers, pain has been and is today recognized as man's enemy, and the *great science and practice of medicine* is built upon that interpretation. The last works from the authorized interpreters of that science are those I have quoted and am now analyzing and criticising." Further: "There is no difference in the action of law, whether applied to life or death, disease or health. There are the same elements at work in the moral, social, financial and ethical worlds. . . . The unsuccessful man, the unfortunate man, the submerged man, must find the cause and remove it. To remove some other fellow; to find fault with other people; to quarrel with the times; to charge up the causes of personal defects to the fallacious economic schemes of the government; to encourage others to join in attending to every one's business except their own, may be palliative remedies—may divert attention from personal shortcomings and failures for a time—but I fail to see even palliation, for the longer such a life is followed the more miserable, good-for-nothing and incapable such people become. The habit of excusing personal failures by charging them up to oppressive social conditions leads to frenzy, suicide or homicide. The cure lies in self-discipline; in cultivating a love of work and an endeavor to be a man. No man is a man until he has self-control—complete mastery of himself." Sound doctrine, which the world sadly needs! T.

The Ether of Space, by Sir Oliver Lodge. Ten years ago Theosophists would have hailed this little book with a pathetic eagerness, as confirming some of our peculiar views about the constitution of the universe, but Western Science has made such advances in the intervening years that we find very little in the book at the present time which makes it suitable for review in a Theosophical publication. But we do find something and an important something.

Sir Oliver Lodge is not only a great physicist, but he has that kind of mind, rare among Western scientists, which seems open to many of the ideas about the universe which have long been taught in the East. His brain is not closed to the more spiritual conceptions which distinguish Eastern cosmogony, and sometimes it would almost seem as if he believed many more of these than he was yet willing publicly to avow, but of which he throws out hints, as if to try gradually to prepare the mind of the Western world for their ultimate acceptance. We have already pointed out in the QUARTERLY his references to Reincarnation. In this little book, so much of which is purely technical and highly scientific, he tells of the character of ether, one cubic millimetre of which (less than a pin head) contains an amount of energy equal to a million horse-power station, working for forty million years (!), and then goes on as follows: "Is there any other function possessed by the ether, which, though not yet discovered, may lie within the bounds of possibility for future discovery? I believe there is, but it is too speculative to refer to, beyond saying that it has been urged as probable by the authors of *The Unseen Universe,* and has been thus tentatively referred to by Clark Maxwell: 'Whether this vast homogeneous expanse of isotropic matter is fitted . . . to constitute the material organism of beings exercising functions of life and mind as high or higher than ours are at present.' "

The special significance of this to Theosophists is apparent when we remember the teaching that the bodies of those spiritual beings whom we know of as adepts or Mahatmas are said to be composed of atomic instead of molecular substance. As an atom is now thought to be a sort of swirl or knot in the ether, we may realize the almost incredible potency of an adept's body: We can appreciate why they can not come around as do ordinary human beings. It is for our good, to keep us from being torn to pieces by their force, that they keep to themselves and take no part in ordinary human activity. Again, Sir Oliver says, "The universe we are living in is an extraordinary one; and our investigation of it has only just begun. We know that matter has a psychical significance, since it can constitute *brain,* which links together the physical and the psychical worlds. If any one thinks that the ether, with all its massiveness and energy, has probably no psychical significance, I find myself unable to agree with him." C. A. G., Jr.

Daily Strength for Daily Needs, and *Joy and Strength for The Pilgrim's Day,* selected by Mary W. Tileston (Little, Brown, and Company, Boston). These two small volumes, which can be obtained in cloth for 75 cents each, are read daily by many members of the Theosophical Society. Perhaps, however, there are others who would like to know of them. They are really helpful—Christian in form, but not in the least dogmatic or sectarian. Fénelon, Emerson, Tauler, Mrs. Ewing, Scupoli, William Law, Madame Guyon, Baron Bunsen, General Gordon and many others, are drawn upon with equal impartiality. A page is devoted to each day in the year and is begun with a brief quotation from the Bible. This is followed by two or three selections from well-known authors, such as those already named, the purpose of which is to elucidate and to call attention to the mystical meaning of the text. The present writer, some years ago, was strongly prejudiced against almost every form of Christian expression. These little books compel recognition of the fact that the genuine mystic is never sectarian, and that Christian terminology can be used to convey the most profound truths of that inner religious life which is common to the aspirants of every creed. T.

Religious Bodies: 1906, is issued by the Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, as Bulletin 103. It shows that there are 186 denominations in the United States, if the "Independent churches" be classed as one denomination. Since 1890, seventeen denominations have been added to the list by division of denominations, and forty-eight have been added which are entirely new to this country. The largest percentage of increase in church membership is shown by the Eastern Orthodox Churches—21,501 per cent. (due, of course, to immigration); the second largest is shown by the "Church of Christ, Scientist," with 882 per cent. The Protestant Episcopal Church, with 66 per cent., shows a much larger increase than the Methodist or Baptist or Presbyterian Churches. The largest numerical increase is shown by the Church of Rome, which, in 1890, had 6,241,708 communicants or members, and in 1906, over twelve million. The smallest percentage of increase is that of the Unitarians, with 4 per cent.

Dreams and Dream Stories, by Anna Kingsford, has been reprinted by John Watkins, London, for 3/6 net. An earlier generation of lovers of the mysterious and occult will recall this book with interest and pleasure and it will serve to renew the fascination which its brilliant author exercised upon all who knew her, and upon many who only knew her through her writings. She was a woman of strange and wonderful gifts as this book shows, and the inspirational character of her great work *The Perfect Way,* is fully described and set forth in this little volume. Much of her inspiration she received in dreams. Sometimes they would be allegories meant to illustrate some definite teaching, at other times they would be stories pointing a moral, or combatting some evil like vivesection. In everything she wrote there is high purpose, noble aims, a sympathetic understanding of suffering and pain, so that it is well that this book should be reprinted.

C. A. G., Jr.

The Common-Sense Bible Teacher, of St. Paul, taking for its motto the words of Jefferson, "Read your Bible then as you would read Livy or Tacitus," and for its guiding star the doctrine of Evolution, is publishing the books of the New Testament separately, in the order in which the editor believes they were written, and in a new translation made by an evolutionist whose aim is to reproduce for the English reader of to-day the impression made by the original on its first readers. Full explanatory notes accompany the text. The department of criticism and discussion is an interesting feature. Quarterly, illustrated, $1.00 a year.

We have also received the October issues of *Luz Astral* (*Quincenario Teosofica*), published at Casablanca, Chile; *Ultra, Rivista Teosofica di Roma,* published in Rome, Italy; *O Pensamento* for October, published at S. Paulo, Brazil; and numerous so-called occult and "new thought" magazines, which are either foolish or pernicious, and which we do not purpose to advertise by name.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 108.—*What is the final aim of inner development? Is it as the old catechism said "to know God and enjoy Him forever?" If so, is the underlying motive of all our struggle tinged with selfishness? Should one keep before one a desire for spiritual advancement? Would the desire defeat its own end?*

ANSWER.—The final aim of inner development is union with the Divine, but no thought of self can enter into the pursuit of such an aim, or it would defeat its own purpose. The latter question has been answered once for all in *Light on the Path.* "Grow as the flower grows, *unconsciously.* . . . But it must be the eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not *desire of growth.*"

The final aim of inner development is certainly not as the old catechism said "to know God and enjoy Him forever." Rather is it to know God in order to become co-workers with Him for good. If we remember that only spirits of the same nature can unite, and that it is only by the loss of all sense of self that we can approach the Divine Being, we are forced to conclude that the Divine Nature is the essence of selflessness.

Moreover, as activity of some sort is indispensable from creation, why should we not say that Nirvana, or union with the Divine, is a glorified kind of unselfish activity?

In *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History* (2d Edition, ch. x., p. 160), we read: "The Mahatmas' unselfishness produces a standard of justice that will sanction no act which wrongs the best of us even though it would benefit the majority." They look upon the individual determined purpose of attaining Nirvana (the culmination of all knowledge) as, after all, "only exalted and glorified *selfishness,* and it is only the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbors, to cause as many of our fellow-creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, that constitutes the true Adeptship."

"For their sakes I sanctify myself." (*John,* 17:19).

V. V. V.

ANSWER.—There is nothing wrong about self-development *per se.* It is only when we grow at the expense of some one else—in developing take from another what is rightfully his—that it becomes wrong. All nature is under the law of development; the only alternative is death. And the outcome for each individual is a transition from the material plane, where selfishness prevails, to the spiritual plane, where selflessness is the very condition of existence. If we throw ourselves open generously to the influences that draw us outward, the question of selfishness or unselfishness melts into nothingness. This is the meaning of the paradoxical teaching in *Light on the Path:* "Grow as the flower grows, *unconsciously,* but *eagerly anxious* to open its soul to the air. So must you *press forward* to *open* your soul to the eternal."

J. X.

ANSWER.—The answer to this question would seem to depend largely upon what the term desire is understood to mean. Among theosophical students at a certain stage in their studies, it seems to be not unusual to regard the quality of Desire as cheap if not actually contemptible; to classify it with the vices rather than with the virtues; to refer to it as something to be got rid of, etc. As a matter of fact, Desire itself is one of our most valuable faculties without which it would be practically impossible to control or restrain any other of our faculties. What is it that awakens the Will and puts it into action but Desire? Behind Will stands Desire, is a fundamental axiom. Aspiration, so called, is merely an aspect of Desire and true prayer is about the same thing. Desire is good or bad according to the direction in which we point it.

But just here comes in a chance for nice discrimination. While constructive *Desire* is beneficial it is quite possible to cultivate morbid *desires* which are of destructive effect, somewhat like fungus growths on a plant which if not removed divert the life current from the healthy tissue and absorb the virility of the real plant even perhaps to the total extinction of the latter. Clearly there should be recognized a difference then between *Desire* and *desires* as there is a distinction between the Self and the self, the former signifying the higher and more permanent inner being and the latter that congeries of physical and lower psychic qualities which make up our mere personalities. Most people whom we ordinarily meet are concerned mainly if not entirely with the affairs of their lower selves and in catering to their personal cravings, and very few of us are able to rise above these even for brief and infrequent moments. Only such as do thus rise can have the slightest conception of what the "spiritual advacement," referred to in the question, stands for; and there are many who talk freely about spiritual advancement who in the very nature of things can have only the most superficial knowledge of the tremendous meaning of that phrase. Indeed it is doubtful if anyone under the rank of adeptship could be said consciously to enter within the spiritual realm, and what we usually refer to as spiritual is seldom if ever other in fact than the higher psychic.

On the whole I should say that probably very few of us are in danger of dire consequences from the indulgence of desire for spiritual advancement. By the time we begin to know anything worth while of the meaning and application of that subject we should have learned to discard our desires and to enter at least in some measure upon the proper direction of that great dynamic force, Desire.

C. M. L.

QUESTION 109.—*How can we be sure whether our vision of truth is a mere psychic will-o'-the-wisp or a reflex of the great spiritual light? Is there any hall-mark by which they can be distinguished?*

ANSWER.—The proof of the reality of anything is given by experience; therefore the only means of distinguishing between truth and fancy is to live according to whatever we believe to be truth. We need have no fear in acting thus; our safety lying in the earnest desire to live according to our ideal. So acting we will soon distinguish between the feeling of peace and feelings of uneasiness, restlessness, sorrow, anxiousness, fear, depression, etc., and will soon awaken to the knowledge that everything connected with the sense of deep peace and surety is truth,—or the will of the soul.

And then we will realize what is said in *Light on the Path*: "Learn from sensation and observe it, because only so can you commence the science of self knowledge."

"In peace there comes the ending of all sorrows, for the soul of inspiration swiftly enfolds him whose heart is full of peace."

Now as to soul vision. What is meant by that? We could speak of our thoughts and feelings concerning spiritual truths as visions even if we don't see anything with the astral sense. I myself have never had any astral visions; but if I had any, I would try to measure them with the measure mentioned, that of the inner touch, that of the Peace which is not ours but that of the Soul.

S. W.

ANSWER.—The sure way is to find the touchstone within oneself. In order to *know,* we have to *be.* So, by continuously conforming to those laws which we know, we open our consciousness to the perception of spiritual things. Then the psychic will-o'-the-wisp will hardly enter our consciousness at all and the great spiritual light will burn all the more brightly. There is a hall-mark but until we have opened our spiritual consciousness to some extent we have no means of perceiving it.

A. K.

ANSWER.—"By their *fruits* ye shall know them" is the best answer I can think of to this question. When "our vision of truth" is one that we can apply to our daily life and results, not only in clearer perception, but also in kinder and more loving deeds and words, more charitable thoughts of others; when under its influence we "grow in grace," and shed around us from day to day a brighter light of charity towards all men; then we shall need no other "hall-mark" to distinguish our vision of truth from a "mere psychic will-o'-the-wisp."

Thomas à Kempis said: "He to whom the eternal Word speaks is set free from many opinions," and the surety upon which Emerson insists in his essay on "The Over Soul," is ours as well: "The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know truth when we see it, let skeptic and scoffer say what they choose. We know truth when we see it, from opinion, as we know when we are awake that we are awake."

V. V. V.

QUESTION 110.—*In the Bhagavad Gita we are told, "Nothing is better for a warrior than a righteous battle" it is "a very door of heaven wide opened." Jesus said, "Resist not evil." Can you explain this contradiction?*

ANSWER.—There is a very great difference between a fight for good and a resistance against evil. A righteous battle is a very positive effort in which the whole warrior takes part and in which the forces of evil may not merely be resisted (a negative quality), but destroyed or transformed. Such apparent contradiction should be read from the point of view of their being positive commandments. "Resist not evil" would, in this way, mean that we are positively to fight for the good and not spend our time in resisting evil. If we keep on striving to resist evil we are still paying attention to it, even though in negative fashion. We should have no concern with it and obliterate it by paying attention only to the good.

A. K.

ANSWER.—The *Gita* speaks of "a *righteous* battle," not of war or conflict in general. But one very good explanation of the passage in Matthew (5:39) referred to in this question is given in Ramanathan's *Gospel according to St. Matthew.* It is in part as follows: "The Law declares in favor of retaliation and the right of private defence, but those who vigilantly practise the art of peace-making or development of love must submit resignedly to high-handed acts, leaving all things to God, as He alone reigneth and is all powerful. Be therefore *still* yourself."

V. V. V.

ANSWER.—The battle spoken of in the Bhagavad Gita has nothing to do with a worldly battle, nothing to do with the quarrels and wars, which nations carry

on against each other. Here is meant the "inner war," the war between the human soul and the lower nature of personal man. As long as the evolution of man lasts, and until he acquires a positive realization of his immortality, he will always be conscious of a double nature in himself. This is taught not only by the sages, the philosophers and founders of religion, but poets and artists have felt strongly this double nature and have expressed it in word and picture. Goethe, for instance, says:

"Two souls, alas! are lodged within my breast,
Which struggle there for undivided reign:
One to the world, with obstinate desire,
And closely-cleaving organs, still adheres;
Above the mist, the other doth aspire
With sacred vehemence, to purer spheres."

It is the struggle between the lower and higher nature which Goethe describes here as waging in man, and it is the same war of which the Gita speaks, This is a "righteous war" and only victory can open the door to the "Kingdom of God," to Heaven, for man. It is righteous, because it *must* be fought. Unwillingness to fight means weakness, disgrace and exclusion from the Kingdom.

A man errs who believes that he can acquire the consciousness of immortality, oneness with Christ, the divine man, *without* this war against the personal lower nature. Aspiration alone will bring him no further, will not redeem him from the slavery of the material world, if he does not conquer at the same time his personal desires and passions.

This "righteous war" of which the Gita speaks, finds no contradiction, but on the contrary a completion in the words of Christ: "Resist not evil." The evil here spoken of is that which comes to us from without, the injustice and calumny, which others show towards us. This evil from without must not be resisted by the man, who is fighting the "righteous war" against his lower nature! Why not? Because that which seems to us as something unjust, evil, undeserved is, in reality, no evil. It is either the effect of former deeds in this life, or in another life and therefore perfect justice. If this is borne with patience, without opposition or complaint, harmony will be restored between the warrior and the outside world. Whereas opposition to the evil, which comes to us from without, would prevent harmony and strengthen disharmony. To the former wrong which we committed we would add a new wrong, without paying up the old debts.

The "evil" which comes to us from without, can also be considered as a lesson, a training for the one who is fighting the "righteous war." He has an opportunity to control his personal nature, to maintain his equipoise and to control himself when attacked unjustly. He has an opportunity to acquire the knowledge that he has "no personal rights in this world." He has an opportunity to learn not to retaliate when attacked, as Christ taught. In such a case, also, resistance to evil would not benefit, but hinder the one who is warring, struggling and striving to lead a theosophical life. He would learn nothing from his opportunities, his experiences would be vain and he would not learn to conquer his lower nature and to acquire equanimity, meekness and love towards his foes.

Therefore the words from the Gita do not contradict the words of Christ. The war against the lower nature is identical with: "resist not evil." The victory which opens the door for us into the "kingdom of God" can not be won if we do not learn to resist no evil. We must even learn to recognize spirituality and divine power in the evil done to us, by submitting to the Great Law, which always manifests itself in righteousness.

P. R.

QUESTION 111.—*What is Evil?*

ANSWER.—Evil is the reverse side of the pairs of opposites called "Good and Evil." Both are necessarily encountered under many circumstances, and variable standards of Right and Wrong, during the long pilgrimage of the soul through the purgatories of Matter. Both are as necessary to Man's spiritual progress, during certain stages of development, as are the balance and poise of a child learning to walk. The unreal name of Evil is "Legion," and under its protean shapes, it seems to wield more power, and to be a more positive force than Good, which is but One against many. This is, however, but proof that this plane is merely a reflection of the higher planes where good is positive, and vice versa.

Evil, Theosophically considered, is the "Great Illusion." "Eva" or Mother Maya, Matter. It is *Ignorance* of Reality. It is the "sense of separateness" that puts barriers between us and our brother men. Good is the Divine Unity, with its encircling of all selves in perfect Harmony.

The logical sequences of Evil are differentiation: struggle, woe and seeming death. During our cyclic development we earn the human right of knowledge and choice between good and evil.

As we are inherently "all One," whatever is evil in each affects the whole human family very strongly here, just as a thought "for good" (or eternity) is all-powerful in Devachan. Even failure to realize the divine Harmony in a Theosophist's life, cannot be an Evil, if one is absolutely intent upon ultimate Good. Evil is "all in the thought" anyhow, so one's change of polarity or Thought Vibration can at any moment cause Evil to disappear from even the lower Minds.

L. P.

ANSWER.—Dirt has been well defined as "matter out of place." Something similar is true of evil. Movement in a wrong direction is evil, as we express by words like "retrogression," "degeneration." To adhere to a form after its time has gone by, is evil. This is why the "sense of separateness" is evil at this time, though good at the beginning of a period of manifestation and differentiation. To adhere to the activities of the psychic world: passion, desire, hate, personality—is evil; as the time has come to pass beyond the psychic to the spiritual. All these forces, in their right place and time, were good. Passion, desire, was the great driving force, through vast periods of evolution. Personality is but the husk of focussed consciousness. Hate is but the distortion of the instinct of self-defense, which is but a mode of the great law of self-being.

So that Evil is a matter of relation and not a matter of entity; and evil is destroyed, when the false relation is corrected. Evil is not the opposite of Good; for Good is but another name for Eternal Being.

C. J.

QUESTION 112.—Madame Blavatsky wrote the following words on the back of a New Year's card. I should greatly like to know the source of her quotation—author, chapter and verse.

"A happy New Year to my dear friend Mrs. ———, from her old 'H. P. B.'

"May 1890 bring you more health, happiness and peace of mind than 1889, and "—may you *never* doubt, for if—

"'Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words
"'To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart
"'Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape'—

"Why should you doubt or fear?

H. P. B."

ANSWER.—We do not know where this is from. Perhaps some of our readers can enlighten us. H. P. B. was quite capable of having written it herself.

EDITOR.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

The space devoted elsewhere in this issue to the review of the fundamental purposes and principles of the Theosophical Society, makes it necessary to content ourselves, under the present heading, with a few brief notes of Branch work, culled almost at random, from among the many letters and reports that have been received.

THE NEW YORK BRANCH has chosen, as the general subject for the winter's discussion, "The Nature of Man," and has issued an attractive leaflet containing the following syllabus:

November 20—Subject: "The Mind and Its Body."
December 4—Subject: "Mind, Soul and Spirit."
December 18—Subject: "Mind and the Animal Nature."
January 1—Subject: "Will and Desire."
January 15—Subject: "The Transfer of Consciousness."
January 29—Subject: "Discipleship."
February 12—Subject: "Karma."
February 26—Subject: "Reincarnation."

The time and place of its meetings (8.30 P. M., at 80 Washington Square) have remained unchanged, but the increase in membership has necessitated a somewhat more formal conduct of the discussions than was previously employed. The topic of the evening is now presented in a fifteen-minute address by some member chosen to lead in its discussion. Five-minute talks then follow by others, each person present being asked to contribute, after which the subject is thrown open to general discussion in any of its phases. The meeting closes with a summary of all the views presented. The leaflet indicates that special interest is taken in the attempt to apply the subjects of discussion to the practical problems of discipleship and daily living.

THE CINCINNATI BRANCH opened its season of active work most auspiciously on September 28th, having moved their meeting place from the Congregational Church, where they were so long and hospitably accommodated, to a new home of their own,—Hall D, Odd Fellows Temple. Public meetings are held every Tuesday evening at eight o'clock, and cover a wide variety of subjects, as will be seen from their syllabus.

Sept. 28—What About Theosophy?
Oct. 5—The Practical Theosophical Life.
" 12—Is there a Divinity which Shapes Our Ends?
" 19—Man's Relation to the Kingdoms Below.
" 26—Civilization.
Nov. 2—Occultism and Theosophy.
" 9—Man's Relation to the Universe.
" 16—The Lost Word.
" 23—Is Man Immortal?
Nov. 30—Earth, a School.
Dec. 7—Music.
" 14—Constitution of Man.
" 21—To be announced.
Jan. 4—Values.
" 11—What is the Goal?
" 18—The Sally Beauchamp Case.
" 25—The True Altruist.
Feb. 1—To be announced.
" 8—The Heart Doctrine.
" 15—Neo-Platonism.
" 22—George Washington.

Mar. 1—A Message from Mars.
" 8—God in Man.
" 15—To be announced.
" 22—Joan of Arc.
" 29—Jacob Boehme.
Apr. 5—The Present Day Physician and Theosophy.
Apr. 12—The Mystics.
" 19—Successive Lives.
" 26—Herbert Spencer.
May 3—Progress of the Monads.
" 10—The Founders of Our Society.
" 17—To be announced.
" 23—Year's Review.

THE PACIFIC BRANCH at Los Angeles has also found it desirable to move into larger and more convenient quarters, and has rented a room for this purpose over the Public Library. It reports a most promising opening of the winter's work, with sincere visitors and much interest in its papers and discussions. Our letter before us speaks particularly of the feeling of "collective individuality" which the Branch meetings impart.

At OCEANO, California, a new Branch has been established, and from all the centers on the Pacific coast there are reports of a most gratifying character.

The readers of *The Mysteries of Eleusis,* contributed from among the papers of the DENVER BRANCH to the last issue of this magazine, will not need to be told that there has been a steadily growing interest in the meetings of this Branch and that its papers and discussions are of an unusually high order. It is not large in numbers but has been an unfailing source of cheer and inspiration to all who come in contact with its work, so that many larger centers owe it a debt of gratitude which they are quick to acknowledge.

Turning from America to England we find the same hopeful outlook. The LONDON LODGE is continuing, with unbroken success, its fortnightly evening meetings in the large hall at Eustace Miles Restaurant, Chandos Street, where lectures have, so far, been given on the following subjects:

October 22—Immortality.
November 3—Occultism.
November 19—The Illusion of Matter.
December 3—The Art of Simplicity.
December 17—The Altar of Life.
December 31—What is Sin?

From the smaller centers in England, as from London, we continue to receive news of increasing attendance and of interest at the meetings of the Society. But more significant than any numerical increase is the great growth that is reported in the spirit of liberality and open-mindedness in the religious and intellectual movements throughout the country. To quote from a South Shields correspondent, "There is a general change. I myself have had the honour of giving, by special request at the Wesleyan Institute, a lecture on the Soul and its Immortality, . . . and many of its students consider that theosophy is helpful to them as Bible scholars. In fact, the whole community is broadening." To cause, or help to cause, such a result as this is truly a "T. S. Activity"; and the spirit which it engenders enables a Wesleyan Minister to refer from his pulpit to the "noble philosophy of Buddhism and the ancient doctrine of reincarnation," in a way that would have been impossible a few years ago, and which does much to remove the barriers of sectarianism.

We cannot close these notes without expressing our pleasure in the action recently taken by the previously independent society in Sweden, in reorganizing as THE SWEDISH NATIONAL BRANCH OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, thus cementing still more closely the bond of comradeship which has proved so mutually helpful to students both in Sweden and America. With this step of the Swedish Society the reconsolidation of the different national bodies has been completed and the Theosophical Society unified in organization as in aim. It must be a matter of general congratulation to see all its national limitations removed and the universal character of the theosophic brotherhood so firmly established. M.